What history tells us?

Dr. Mubarak Ali

Book Street, 39-Mozang Road, Lahore

e-mail: tarikh.publishers@gmail.com

To

Dr Riaz Ahmed Sheikh

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Learning from History

There is a popular perception that we learn from history, we cannot repeat the same mistakes again and again. We all know the famous saying that those who do not lean from history are condemned to repeat it.

The question is whether we learn any lesson from history or read it just for entertainment. Does history have the power, force and guidelines to teach us not to make past mistakes?

There is no doubt that we learn from history not what history teaches us but what we want to learn from it. For example, history tells a that war brings destruction and devastation but in spite of all horrors, war has not ended and we are still inventing more lethal weapons to destroy each other. War is the outcome of political and economic domination over weaker nations or a form of revenge against hostile opponents. It is a result of ambition to control and rule the whole world.

Through the centuries, every imperial power that once ruled the world eventually declined and collapsed – This is an undeniable fact of history. Yet no superpower teams anything from this lesson and each one continues on the same path as its predecessors. There are predictions that the imperial power of USA is going to decline but the lust for domination is so deep that the imperialists do not bother to learn from history as they are too deeply enamored by the hegemony they enjoy over the world as a super power.

Further, history tells us that the end of most dictators is very tragic. Concentration of all power in one person and brutally crushing all opposition has, proved disastrous throughout history but the lust for power is so

addictive that every dictator adopts the same methods to rule over the people. Among the modern dictator, who met a tragic fate is Hitler, who committed suicide and left his country defeated and humiliated. Mussolini was killed by the mob and his dead body was hanged upside down. However, instead of learning any lesson, dictators continue to overthrow constitutional governments in Asia, Africa, and Latin America believing that they could avoid the mistakes of the past dictators and rule over people without any resistance. They all try to refine their tactics to strengthen their rule. They forget the end of Marcos, Pinoche, Idi Amin and a host of other dictators who were either killed or spent the rest of their life in exile.

History records that those who ruled with an iron hand and implemented oppressive and draconian laws, in the end failed to keep their power. People can endure suppression up to a certain limit and a certain period of time; after that they rebel to get rid of callous rulers. History is full of the accounts of those who imposed their absolute power against popular will. Sadistic dictator like Nero and Caligula who revelled in human suffering -ended their own lives in tragedy.

Those who once assume absolute power rely on repressive laws and silence their opponents by means of imprisonment, torture, and by depriving them of their livelihood. Military generals who usurp power unconstitutionally do not learn from history that opposition is an important element. Instead of allowing the opposition to play its role, they remain highly conscious of their weaknesses and use state institutions to crush all opposition.

When all wall of Berlin was razed to the ground by the people, it appeared that no one could separate and suppress people by building walls. But instead of learning this, the Israelis decided to construct a more solid and strong wall which could not be demolished.

In Pakistan we have witnessed for the last 62 years how all types of govern nets maintain a hostile attitude against those who criticize their policies. Their political opponents, including politicians and intellectuals, are hunted by secret agencies and persecuted both socially and economically. This leads to a discontinuation of intellectual and political traditions to oppose the establishment and the ruling classes. The downfall of intellectual activities is evident because we are not producing new ideas and thoughts of guide the society to get rid of the present quagmire.

Perhaps those who wield power are not interested in what history wants to teach them instead they try to alter history to suit their interest. However, generally, people learn from history that absolute power ends tragically and repressive policies cannot deter people for long. Always there are voices which speak against oppression and change the course of history. History gives hope to people and inspires them to struggle against absolute and corrupt power for a better future.

Writing History

Writing history has always been a difficult task for historians. The people who were employed to write the history of kings and nobles had to highlight their achievements and hide their weaknesses and crimes. Such historical accounts provide information about court life and movement of rulers but ignore the activities of the common people. However, there are examples when under harsh conditions some historians tried to criticise the reigning monarch and endured hard punishment. In ancient China, one historian, whose body parts were amputated because of writing unfavourably about the king, declared that he wrote only such history which could provide full knowledge and create historical consciousness in the future generation. Though he suffered badly, his history survived all vicissitudes of politics.

Some historians manage to depict sorry and dismal conditions between the lines. Shams Siraj Afif, the author of *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi* narrates this event involving Fine Shah Tughlaq: one day when the Sultan was on his way to the palace he saw a wld.er along with his horse coming from the office of registration The Sultan asked whether the man had registered his name for the army or not. The soldier replied negative saying that the officer in charge demanded two *ashrafis* as bride and as he did not have the amount his name was not registered. The Sultan was moved by his story and immediately gave him two *ashrafis* and asked him to get himself registered. The author praises the Sultan's generosity and kind- heartedness. But one can easily make out from the story that corruption was so prevalent that even the Sultan could not control it.

A different example is of Abdul Qadir Badayuni, the Author of *Muntakhab al Tawarikh*. The book was written secretly criticising Akbar and his religious policy, and provide such information which is not available in other contemporary sources When Emperor Jahangir leant about this he inquired from his son who expressed his ignorance about the book. Now it is one of the important sources on the reign of Akbar. However, with a few exceptions, the majority of sources are full of praise and admiration for their patrons. It was not an easy task for historians to record an accurate account. They had to present the point of view of the patron who employed them to undertake this job.

A change in history writing came when the Mughal dynasty declined and the rulers as well as the nobility lost power and resources. Historians started to write independently away from the court and accused the ruling classes for the decline in this era we thus find emperors and nobles portrayed as debauch, intriguerers, and cowards.

During the colonial period, The East India Company assigned some historians the task of writing history in a way so as to justify its rule it view of the chaotic political and social situation. History was used as a tool to legitimize the rule of the Company.

Keeping this background in view, it has become very difficult for historians in Pakistan to write correct history. As there is a rise in ethnic nationalism, sectarianism and tribalism, people have become very sensitive about their identity. Every group and community has its own heroes and traitors. They have created their own version or history which makes them proud or their past and strengthens their identity. If anything is written or said against it, it is regarded as violation.

One such example is the role of Ahmad Shah Abdali who is greatly revered and respected by the Pushtuns and referred to as *baba* or father. To the people of

Punjab and North India he was an aggresssor and invader who plundered and looted, and massacred people.

In Punjab there is a proverb eat whatever you have because the rest will be taken by Ahmad Shah'. People of Sindh still remembered the invasion of the Afghans And trapping of then houses by calling *ghora re ghora* 'horses. oh, horses'. These words remind them of the Afghan invasion. To the Pushtuns he is a hero but to others he is an evil person. How to reconcile these two views is an important question.

The same as the case with the history of Sindh and Balochistan. To struggle for their rights they created heroes from the past and present them as models to continue their political struggle. If any attempt is made to evaluate these heroes correctly, it would hurt the sensibilities of these nationalist group.

Although it is the risk of historians to analyse and criticise without taking care of ethnic or sectarian feelings, there is political and social pressure either to write what people like a read or keep quite. As society is breaking up in ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian groups, it is becoming difficult day by day to write history objectively - a history which will create consciousness and not one which will mislead people.

Rewriting History

History is a dynamic subject and continuously changes to fulfill the needs of a society. Though historical facts remain the same they are interpreted again and again with fresh perspective. Historical accounts change when some new facts come to light or new sources provide more information or new theories are evolved to analyse historical narrative. History writing is not just about describing the facts as they happened but also about interpreting them in view of the social, political, and economic background. That's why new theories and ideas assess and examine historical accounts with a different and fresh point of view. Continuous rewriting of history keeps it alive.

Historians are influenced by the situation in which they use and view the past with reference to the present. How points of view change with the change of time is illustrated to the case of the Greek historian, Herodotus, who was regarded as the father of history by Cicero, the Roman thinker, who recognised him as the authentic historian of his time. His position was challenged during the Renaissance period when more research was done into the past and his account of history was criticized as a bundle of lies.

He was discredited as an authentic historian and his book *Histories* was labeled as a bunch of fairy tales. However, with the passage of time archaeological discoveries and new sources of information changed this view again and in the 19th century historians rehabilitated him as an authentic and reliable historian. His position was further strengthened in the 20th century when his work was

accepted as an important source of information regarding the history of Greece.

In another example, we find the distortion of history in the times of dynastic wars, when those who were defeated were denigrated by the victors who suppressed their positive contribution and condemned them as oppressors and unpopular rulers. In the case of Islamic history, the Umayyad period was portrayed as a period of chaos, disorder, crises and repression by the Abbasid historians.

Especially, Hajjaj bin Yusuf appears as the most callous and cruel individual. Modern historians, are making attempts to correct the perception of the Ummayad rulers and highlight their contribution perception of the Umayyad rulers and highlight their contribution.

In Indian history we find such examples in the Mughal historiography where Hemu, who fought valiantly in the second battle of Panipat against the Mughals, is referred to as *baqqal* or petty shopkeeper in order to reduce his role as a general who nearly defeated the Mughal army.

Sher Shah Suri, who defeated Humayun and laid the foundation of the Suri dynasty, was called Sher Khan by the Mughals to reduce his status to that of an ordinary chief. Research by modern historians shows that he was a most talented ruler who introduced innovative reforms in administration. As a result of this he regained his position in history.

Modern historians are in a position to rewrite and correct past history because they are well equipped with new research techniques. Ziauddun Bararn books *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*, and *Fatwa-i-Jahandari* are a case in point.

When analysed by historians it was found that he put in the mouths of some historical individuals his own personal views and presented them as theirs The critical analysis changes the authenticity of his works. Abut Fuzl, Akbar's court historian is accused by Smith in his book

Akbar the Great Mogul of being a flatterer and Ahmad Rashid in his book *Akhar the Great Mughal* also calls him a shameless flatterer. However, Harbans Mukhia in his article on Abul Fazl highlights his qualities as a great historian of his time. Therefore, rewriting history brings different points of view to the fore and snakes history not only interesting but a source of inspiration.

When history is written in the framework of an ideology, it becomes difficult for a historian to correct and rewrite it. In Pakistan, we ate lacing this problem. The entire history of the Pakistan movement is written with an ideological point of view in which politicians and individuals, are presented as makers of history. To deviate from this and rewrite it from a different angle is considered as going against national interest. If historians repeat the same events and version of history again and again, it becomes boring and dull. That's why, there is a need to allow other interpretations to analyse history critically.

The case of former East Pakistan is an example. The entire episode is written in Pakistan with a nationalist point of view. The blunders of our ruling classes are not recognised and it is simply dismissed as a conspiracy which was hatched by the Indians. We refuse to accept our own mishandling which caused the separation. Such a distorted history creates a distorted consciousness in society. That is why we are repeating the same mistakes and are not ready to learn from history.

Should the Past be Forgotten?

Whenever scandals of corruption, embezzlement, misuse of power, and violation of constitution are exposed, our ruling classes, instead of recognizing their mistakes and wrong doings. Immediately exhort the people to forget the past and look ahead to the future.

Their argument is that it is no use remembering the misdeeds of the past and opening old wounds which mutilated the nation, therefore, the best way is to erase it from the memory believing that nothing happened in the past It we follow this advice and let those who are involved in political, social, and financial crimes go scot-free how can we learn from history to correct our policies"

If we trace our history since 1947, there are so many unpleasant events which we will have to forget; for example, the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly in 1954 by Ghulam Muhammad and the judgment of Justice Munir to legalise it through the Doctrine of Necessity. We will have to forget the 1958 coup by Ayuh Khan, abrogation of the 1956 constitution and imposition of the first Martial law which checked the process of democracy. We will have to forget the army action in the former Eau Pakistan when thousands of Bengalis were massacred and subsequently our eastern wing became Bangladesh. We will have to forget Ziaul Hay's Martial Law in 1977 and the execution of Z.A. Bhutto. We will have to forget the Democratic era after Zia and the involvement of Intelligence agencies in politics and the corruption of politicians which rocked the process of democracy. thus paving the way for another Martial Law by Pervaiz Musharraf How the common people are suffering in the

present democratic set-up should also be forgotten in the hope of some distant future. It is in the interest of the ruling classes not to remember any negative and black spots of history in order to give them a chance to come to power again.

It we exclude all there aspects of our history, then we do not have any history at all It is correct that history sometimes becomes.a burden for the titling classes who do not like to sec their face in its mirror. Therefore, they make attempts to change history and keep their face clean and pure like the 'Picture of Dorian Grey' and record only those events which suit them This is done by official historians who are employed by the state and accomplish the task by distorting history. Secondly, some individuals of the ruling clauses waste their autobiographies and present selected events to justify their role. Thirdly, attempts are made to wipe out history all together leaving no trace of it, plus we have done in the case of the separation of East Pakistan As we are not historically conscious, our rulers are not alt aid of history. In the absence of independent historians; they feel themselves sate and secure because history is not recording their crimes and misdeeds. As every ruler is proving worse than his predecessors, people remember the earlier ones and find their time better and more peaceful as compared to the present. It is ironical that as a result of the misrule of the present rulers, the image of Ayub Khan is becoming brighter and people are forgetting his dictatorial acts which harried the country.

Historical consciousness demands not to forget the past but to remember it If we remember the past only then we can learn from history. We are committing the same mistakes again and again because we are not learning from the past.

The army interfered in political affairs and declared Martial Law in the name of law and order and governance, which in fact in the past had resulted in inure chaos and

anarchy. Secret agencies polluted the political atmosphere by corrupting politicians and by orating division in political parties which ended in collapsing the credibility of the political parties. The judiciary with the collision of titling classes, legalised their illegal and unconstitutional acts which resulted in loss of its integrity.

All military and civilian rulers tried to control all those elements which could challenge their title such as students, trade unions, and intellectuals. The result is that all elements of political change have become so weak that to impose dictatorial rule has become easy.

As a result of a lack of historical consciousness the same leaders conic to power again and again with new facts and new slogans. Not remembering their past, people again accept them as their deliverer. This is how history is repeating itself in Pakistan. That is why these leaders ask the people to forget the past and be ready to become their victims again Thus, there is a need to write history independently and record all crimes which are committed by politicians, generals, intellectuals and social workers. Only real and not false historical consciousness can save this society from decadence.

Do we have a History?

Hegel some where wrote that nature has no history because its movement is regulated without any change. Everyday sun rises and sets, seasons come and go according to their schedule. So, there is nothing new or innovative in its movement which could he recorded. This principle call also he applied to those nations and countries whose movement is cyclic and produces no new ideas to enrich the history of humankind.

History tells us that there are two types of nations; those who contribute to world civilization and those who lust consume what is produced by others. The first category of nations create highly advanced civilization while the later passively live on the knowledge developed by others to intellectual poverty and historical oblivion. Therefore, every nation is not capable of making history or changing the process of history by their acts.

Making history is a difficult task. It requires creativity, mature intellect, and capacity to respond to the political, social, and economic challenges. Not believing in any absolute truth but altering and amending views according to the need of time. Equipped with these qualities nations unfold the mysteries of nature, eliminate obsolete systems, and discover new schemes to shape and reshape the world from a fresh perspective.

In a history making process, the wheel of change should always be moving - it is a source of energy and vitality.

Traditional historians put those nations in the category of 'History Makers' who built empires by defeating other nations, occupying their countries and

plundering their resource. Such nations could be called hooligans of mankind. The empires survived for a time and declined miserably, leaving these nations burdened with crimes against humanity. In fact, the empire builders were not history, makers but those who destroyed history by enslaving weaker nations and curbing their potentiality to develop, their societies.

To understand the process of history, we find that there is history of events and history of ideas. Social, political, and cultural events occur in every society routinely without creating any results. Some events cause a ripple in a society without bringing any radical change such as crimes and scandals which attract the attention of the people but are soon forgotten. On the contrary, history of ideas creates a new consciousness and causes a change in people's minds which radically changes the society and its structure. Those events which take place under the influence of ideas hare an impact on the society making it capable of responding to the ongoing challenges and reconstruct new basis.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, we can say that it has no history of ideas because its society has neither the capacity to face the challenge nor the creativity to invent anything in science and technology to improve its skill to compete with others nations. In art, literature, painting, and architecture, it has produced nothing original and substantial. It has neither original philosophers, scientists, poets, writers, artists, and historians nor politicians and statesmen who could lead the nation in the right direction.

Pakistani society depends on the ideas, thoughts, and inventions of others. It is not creating any knowledge but just consuming it. Therefore, it is not contributing to the civilisation of the world. It is one of those nations which are not making history but passively watching those who are making it. That is why its social and cultural life is shallow and stagnant.

The country's so called political history also contains nothing but intrigues and conspiracies. Nothing important happened since Its inception in 1947. Its political history is moving like pendulum between democracy and Martial Law. When politicians create chaos get involved in corruption, and abuse power for benefit, the army comes in in the name of Law and Order. People who are tired of politicians and their intrigues, welcome Martial law in the hope of peace and popery. Soon, they are disillusioned because this results are not what people hoped for and expected from army rule. The game of musical chair is going on without any change of script.

When Ayub Khan took over as martial Law Administrator he told the nation that political leaders ravaged the country and some of them did it as a matter of right. He accused them of sacrificing the country and promoting their self interest. The same text was repeated by every tator after declaring Martial Law. Another example, the text which was read out by Ghutam Ishaq Khan on the dismissal of Benazir's first government; the same charge sheet was repeated against Nawaz Sharif and again against Benazir. This shows the stagnancy of political events in our country. So, when events repeat themselves routinely without any impact they cannot be a part of history. Thus, Pakistani history is moving in a cycle which has no opening to get rid of repetition. As Iong as it remains in cyclic movement, it cannot make history.

Alternative History

The concept of alternative history is to separate historiography from the powerful groups who control it for their own purposes. By subverting their hegemony, it makes an attempt to include those who were excluded from history and have been declared history-less people.

Throughout the period of recorded history, history writing was used by the ruling classes to maintain their high status. History written under their instructions portrays them as makers of history and attributes all achievements to them. It was customary for rulers to employ historians in order to prove the continuity of their dynasties and to provide them a dignified place in history. Moreover, it was used to legitimise established traditions and values to keep the status quo. Thus, history was used as an effective tool to dominate the minds of common people and undermine any effort to challenge the established system.

However, in the historiography of the subcontinent, during the medieval period Sufi saints made an attempt to shift the power concept from politics to spirituality. Disciples of different Sufi orders wrote *tazkirajat* (narratives) and *malfuzat* (savings) of the Sufi Sheikhs which proved that they were in fact the real actors who managed and administered the whole system of their time. To counter the political kingdom, they established the spiritual kingdom, divided it into different parts and appointed their *khulafa* (deputies) to look after the welfare of the people. According to their accounts nearly all conquests were won by the blessing of Sufi saints. Such was the power of these Sufis that rulers sought their help whenever they were in crisis.

The third dimension of power emerged during the colonial period when the Mughal Empire came to an end. The ulema came to the forefront to protect the Muslim identity in India. To acquire legitimacy for their role, history was used to record their reformative and revolutionary role. Abul Kalam Azad in his book *Tazkira* recorded the contribution of ulema to the cause of Islamic revival in India, and paid tribute to the role of Ahmad and Shah Waliullah. This was followed by a number of books which highlighted the achievement, merits of ulema in different periods. Thus from political and spiritual power, these writers shifted the concept to religious power. Vast quantities of literature came into being to glorify the role of ulema in history.

During the colonial period, historiography passed through different ideologies. First, the columnists denigrated the Indian past; the medieval period, especially, was portrayed as despotic and the Muslim rulers as oppressors of their Hindu subjects. In response to this, Indian historians wrote history with a nationalist point of view and argued that during the medieval period there was no discrimination between the Hindus and Muslim. On the contrary both created a composite culture and shared history.

However, as result of communalisation of politics, historiography was also affected and both Hindus and Muslims interpreted history through a communal point of view in which Muslims resurrected Muhammad bin Qasim, and portrayed Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad Ghori as their heroes, while Hindus brought to light non-Muslim heroes like Rana Partab, Shivaji and Guru Govind Singh who put up resistance against the Muslim rulers.

During the early 20th century, history writing was changing. European historians challenged the Rankian concept that correct and authentic history could be written only on the basis of state documents (to the Germans the

state is a sacred institutions). The historians of *Annles School* moved to writing cultural history and used several different sources like diaries, letters, literary work, newspapers, and magazines to construct social and cultural history.

In the 1960s, Edward Thomas published an article on the concept of history from below. This opened a new venue to historians who made attempts to retrieve the history of history-less people. To discover forgotten history, historians used judicial records, revenue documents and personal papers. The result of their efforts was amazing. Ginzburg's book The *Cheese and the Worms* is an example in which he traces the religious beliefs of Italian peasants of Late medieval period, focusing on the case of a peasant who was condemned to death on charges of blaspheme. He used the documents of the Inquisition which held his trial.

This point of view led historians to investigate those groups who had been forgotten and so, slaves, shepherds, labourers, peasants, and artisans were given a dignified place in history. Marxist historians contributed significantly in this respect. E.P. Thomson and Eric Hohshawm are two prominent historians among others who enriched the history of the subordinate classes. In India, the Subaltern historians were the first to retrieve which was lost and not recorded, and document the role of those people. Feminist history came out as a result of the women's movement in the 1960s. American blacks are writing their own history to assert their contribution to American culture.

Oral history is another approach to bring to light those who have no written record. Oral narratives are collected and investigated to record history. There are so many varieties of historiography that history no longer remains the monopoly of one power. Now, every individual and croup has a right to have a dignified place in history.

Task of the Historian

History is a powerful subject which can be used to create a true historical consciousness. Unfortunately, it can also he misused and we often sec how politician distort it to whip up the emotion of people in older to achieve their political agenda. As they have a large following their version of history becomes popular among their follower. If not corrected the falsification of history is accepted as the absolute truth. This raise the question whether historians should challenge the popular emotions of the people and correct historical facts or keep silent and let the falsification go on unchecked.

Harbans Mukhia is one of those historians who, whenever he finds distortion and misuse of history, comes forward and challenges it. He has published several articles to dispel misinformation and these have recently been compiled and published as *Issues in Indian History, Politics and Society* (Aakar Books, New Delhi, 2009).

Indian historians faced a serious challenge when BJP created a political crisis on the question of Babri mosque which they claimed was built on the site of *Ramjanabhmi*. When Advani led the *rathe rathyatra*. he created a religious frenzy and stimulated the sentiments of the people just to get popularity for his party. Harbans Mukhia was one of those historians who came forward and proved that the mosque was not built on the site of the temple.

In one of his articles he analysed the role of religious frenzy; how it blinds the mob and how it creates crises. The such example are the crusades of the medieval period when the Christian church mobilized the emotions

of common people in the name of religion and urged them to liberate the holy land from the Muslims. Recent research shows that the real motive was not religious but commercial as Italian merchants invested capital in these campaigns for their benefits.

The other case of religious frenzy was of Nazi Germany when the Nazi party terrorized the Jews. Today we find the same religious frenzy in Pakistan when extremist groups break TV sets, burn CDs, instruct men to keep beards and women to observe *purdah.* Religious frenzy reaches its height when young people become suicide bombers and sacrifice their lives in the name of religion. Historically, the real motives behind religious frenzy are always either political or economic.

Mukhia also analyses the role of slogans and how they unite a crowd of people into one entity. The individual identity disappears and everyone joins the mob; the force and energy of the mob turns it into a flowing river that sweeps away everything before it. When slogans are composed in poetic language they appeal more to the sentiments of the people and lead them to extreme ends. History shows how slogans caused havoc and crisis after crisis. Slogans that are composed to express hostility and threat against opponents are very relevant to our political culture; however, there are also slogans which express peace and tolerance and promote unity.

On the subject of history, Mukhia's articles are very enlightened. His main interest is in medieval history and he edited a biannual journal, *'Medieval History'* (Sage Publication).

According to him, historiography of the medieval history of India reflects the politics of the 1920s. During the Freedom Movement there were two major trends in politics: nationalism and communalism. Nationalist historians such as Muhammad Habib. Tara Chand. R.C. Tripathi, and V.R. Shama made attempts to prove that there

was religious harmony during the medieval period and both Hindus and Muslims created a composite culture. On the other hand, communalist historians such as R.C Maajumdar and I.H. Qureshi argued that the division between the followers of these religions was deep.

The post Independence historians of India have changed this perception of history. They are not obsessed with religion and have analysed other factors which played important roles in the process of history. Some historians deviated from the iron framework of nationalism and communalism and brought to light certain significant facts which have changed the perception of some individual rulers. For example, Iqtida Alam Khan proved that Akbar re-imposed *jizva* on his Hindu subjects after abolishing it in his early rule.Similarly, Athar Ali writing on Aurangzeb points out that though he demolished temples, he also granted land and donations to Buddhist and Jain temple, Later on these documents were collected and published. These new findings have changed the historical outlook of medieval India.

According to Harbans Mukhia, history should be understood in relation to power which uses religion for its advantage. He gives the recent example of Rajiv Gandhi, who, on one hand pleased the Muslims by passing the 'women's bill' and on the other hand, pleased the Hindus by breaking the lock of Babri mosque.

Though these articles are written in the context of India they are also relevant to us in Pakistan. They provide deep historical insight and help us understand the past as well as the present.

Construction of History

In the process of undergoing decolonization, colonized countries adopted two methods to gain freedom. One in which political parties and their leaderships, by adopting constitutional emans, agitated, demonstrated, organized protest meetings, mobilized people to resistance and subsequently negotiated on the basis of mutual understanding, the terms of independence.

Where this mode was not successful, they declared war against the colonial powers and, after the sacrifice of thousands of people, won independence.

The frist category is generally reffered as the 'struggle for freedom' and the second one as a 'war of liberation'.

When a new country emerged as independent, it became the responsibility of historian to construct its hirtory from a fresh perspectives and provide and legitimacy to its foundation. The distant past which was forgotten or distorted during the colonial period was rese___ to kink it with the present in order to obtain a continuity of _______.

In the case of Bangladesh, we find that it experienced both phases leading to its independence; the struggle for freedom as well as a war of liberation. In 1947, as a part of the Muslim League campaign to have a separate homeland for the Muslims, it participated in the independence struggle and, after the partition of India, it acquired the new nomenclature of East Pakistan. In 1971, disappointed and disgusted by the policies of the West Pakistan government, when all negotiation for a peaceful solution had failed, military action forced its people to fight

a war of liberation and East Pakistan transformed itself into Bangladesh.

Like all newly independent countries, it became the task of Bengali historians to find a new basis of their history. First, the separation from West Pakistan was called the 'war of liberation', meaning that the freedom of their country was earned not through peaceful means but fighting a bloody war. TO provide material to historians, the Government of Bangladesh published 15 volumes of documents on it, TO remember it, monuments were built and a museum set up. Those who sacrificed their lives during the war were immortalized as heroes.

Further, historians looked at its historians looked at its history beyond 1971. According to one b=view, Bengal from the very beginning had separate identity, history and culture.

Though it was conquered and subjugated by north Indian ruling dynasties it never lost its sprit of independence. Moreover, throughout history it provided refuge to rebels and dissident groups and resisted the exercise of central power, this indicating its spirit of freedom, opposition to exploitation and love for justice.

They glorified the past by tracing its history to an ancient period. Bengal was a rich and prosperous country. It had a golden period when there was no famine or starvation. It developed its textile industry with skill that the Muslim of Dhaka became famous throughout the world. In trade and commerce it had relations with its neighbours and its towns had markets which were full of merchandise and all types of commodities. It is argued that the people of Bengal had sense of nationhood and took pride in their culture and identity which ultimately culminated in separation from Pakistan.

During the colonial period, an attempt was made to break its national unity by diving in 1905. However, its

response was so sharp that the British government was forced to annul its decision in 1911.

At the same time of partition, Hyseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy along with other Bengali leaders wanted to have independent Bengal. The Muslim League leadership accepted the plan but Congress refused it and ultimately it was partitioned on the basis of religion. East Bengal or East Pakistan suffered as a part of Pakistan. The Pakistani state failed to integrate the Bengalis in the political mainstream. Their language was not given national status. Politically they were not treated on the basis of equality. Their financial share did not go towards the development of their province. Religious nationalism failed to keep them united.

Therefore, historians argue that the separation of Bangladesh was based on linguistic nationalism rather than built on religious lines. They call it Bangladeshi nationalism. Moreover, in the newly constructed history, the role of the Awami League , its leader Mujibur Rahman and the Mukti Bahini is more eulogized while other factions and groups who struggled and fought are either marginalized or ignored altogether.

There is a group of historians who look at its independence with a different point of view. According to their arguments, war and the separation of Bangladesh were the result of conficts between two elite classes constituting Bengalis and West Pakistanis. As the ruling classes of West Pakistan were dominated by the aristocracy, it was not in their interest to share with the Bengali elite class. This caused a disruption in relations, resulting ultimately in the break up of the country.

However, the common people did not get anything. One exploitative system replaced another. Pakistanis in general are not aware of the history of Bangladesh; it is time to study it and understand different points of view.

Forgotten People of History

Generally historians and writers prefer to write biographies of famous personalities to highlight their achievements, but not their crimes. There are few historians concerned about the lives of ordinary people whose contribution in making history is significant, but they are not recognized y the elite classes; thus history also ignores them. Credit goes to Pervaiz vandal and Sajida Vandal to bring to light the lift of Bhai Ram Singh who designed some of the most important and beautiful buildings of colonial Lahore. That is how a forgotten man surfaced from the oblivion of history to a prominent position.

There are four important points that re discussed by the Vandals in their book. *The Raj, Lahore and Bhai Ram Singh* (NCA Publication, 2006). First, they treat architecture not merely as a technical but rather as a social factor that reflects customs, cultural behavior, practices, social attitudes and way of a society. In this respect, architecture has ultitarian as well as aesthetic aspects and is an important source to study a society.

Second, besides its cultural and social importance, the authors point out the political use of architecture. Throughout history, architecture, architecture has played an important political role. Ruling classes, with the help of architecture, asserted their authority and power. For example in the case of conquerors and invaders, we find that hey adopted different policies towards the architectural monuments of vanquished nations. Either they destroyed building of occupied territories in order to wipe out their past or distorted and disfigured them to show their contempt.

Or, in case of long and permanent occupation, they used existing buildings with some amendments and changes. One example is the Arab conquest of Damascus, which was a Byzantine city. The conquerors used the existing buildings with some changes and especially converted the main church into a mosque as a symbol of their religious assertion. The city of Baghdad was built only after consolidation of political power, with a new vision signifying the Abbasid power all over the world. It proves that in the frist phase, when conquerors were in a hurry to show, their presence and having no time to construct new buildings, they relied on old architectural structures. In the second phase, with resources and a new vision, they were able to build such buildings that expressed their domination and vision to rule over the conquered countries.

Another example is that of the Turkish conquerors of India, who immediately after their conquest built the Quwatul Islam mosque and Qutb Minar to assert their political domination over the newly acquired territories. Because both buildings were built hurriedly material from temples was used without any concern for the religious sensibilities of the local people. However, to show their religious fanaticism, the figures of gods and goddness were distorted, which indicates their contempts for the defeated people. Therefore, architecture was used both by conquerors as well as ruling dynasties to show their power and grandeur to impress people. It was used as a symbol of power and wealth because buildings were visible and by looking at and seeing them, they created both awe and appreciation. That is why they built memorials of their victories to remind their subjects of their military might.

The authors in this respect point out the case of the British, who in the first phase of their occupation used old buildings but also build new public buildings on the pattern of their homeland to provide the same atmosphere and milieu to their servants. As their political power grew, their

attitude towards the Indian architecture became contemptuous. Finally when they became the masters of India, they commissioned public buildings showing their social, cultural and political supremacy over local architecture. Such was the contempt of past historical monuments of India that once the British government decided to demolish the Taj Mahal and sell its marble in the London market.

Luckily, it was saved because the price of marble in London markets at that time became very low. The reason wsa that there was Greek marble in great quantity in the London market, which made the proce low and the Taj mahal was thus saved.

Third, the authors argue that as a result of the British becoming the occupying power, their social, cultural and political needs motivated them to evolve a new form of architecture. At this juncture appeared Bhai Ram Singh to blend the local and colonial traditions and helped to develop a new form of colonial architecture. In the history of Indian architecture, there are forgotton architectects, designers and builders. For example, Mughal buildings are spread throughout the Indian subcontinent. Who designed and built these marvelous buildings? Hardly have we known their names. So, it is easy to refer to the building of the Taj Mahal to Shahjehan and the neautiful mosque of Shahjehan and the beautiful mosque of Lahore to Wazir to Wazir Khan. They were actually investors and builders are the forgotten people of history. Few efforts are made by historians to trace them , and these efforts remain unsuccessful as historical documents are silent on naming them. The same was thecase of Bhai Ram Singh, who designed wonderful buildings and monuments during the colonial period, but soon his name disappeared and the names of Aitcheson, Queen Mary, Mayo and some wealthy and famous investors became attached to his designed buildings.

Therefore it is a great contribution of the Vandals to bring to light a forgotten architect whose brilliance is refected in all those buildings that he designed. After the publication of this volume, Bhai Ram Singh would certainly get his due dignified place in history. He would no more remain a forgotten man of history.

The history of rage

Emotions are an integral part of a human being's psyche and as such they play a major role in shaping and changing the historical course of humankind. As history is broadening its scope to include aspects which were so far ignored, historians are now analysing and probing the role of emotions in the process of history. It is an interesting and fascinating study to unfold those mysteries which were hidden under the surface of events.

History tells us that emotional expressions are never the same; they change from time to time according to particular situations and circumstances. However, by their very expression we can determine the values and cultural and social customs of a period and evaluate the social structure of society.

How do emotions influence history? This is a question that historians are now attempting to answer and one of the first emotions they have undertaken to trace is the history of anger. Anger is a universal emotion but its expression varies from person to person. Everyone expresses anger according to his or her personality and social status, not only through body language but also through speech. When a person gives in to his anger he is liable to abuse, curse, condemn and criticise his victims openly.

Civilised society demands that one should control one's anger and express it in a socially accepted manner; therefore, those who suppress it and overpower their emotions are called civilised. It is believed that those who fail to master their emotions are weak in character.

Anger is also related to class and social status. Those who have a higher status often use anger as a tool to terrorise and harass their inferiors in order to make them obedient. They believe that this is a way to keep people cowed and curb their independence.

On the other hand, people belonging to a lower social status control their emotions in front of their masters and cannot afford to express their anger either through their body language or through their speech. Their social status does not allow them to be angry with their superiors. Only people of equal social status are free to express their anger at each other as there is no social barrier.

Barbra H. Rosenwein`s book The Anger`s Past The social use of an emotion in the Middle Ages, is an interesting study. It is a collection of articles which deal with the emotion of anger related to different classes such as priests, rulers, landlords, and peasants. If somebody cursed in a state of anger, his expression reflected his social, religious or secular views. For example, a religious man cursed his opponents with these words `May Lord toss their bodies as a bait to the birds of the sky and the beast of the land. May their homes be deserted and may no one inhabit them. May they be damned with the devil in hell and may they burn in the eternal fire.

It is to be noted that when priests sought the help of God, it meant that they themselves were not powerful and were beseeching for divine intervention to help them punish their adversaries. Secondly, they did not want to take responsibility of damaging or harming anybody as priests symbolised peace and harmony; instead they put all responsibility on God.

In case of non religious curses, abuses which were hurled at subordinates were those that challenged their honour such as calling them dishonest, lazy, hooligans, and miscreants.

Generally all religions condemn anger as it goes against the spirit of tolerance and the sense of propriety. In Christianity priests are told that since anger is a sin of the soul, one must not correct a sinner with a sin. They are even discouraged from performing their prayer rituals while if they have anger in their heart, and are exhorted to be patient and cultivate humility in order to serve the community.

However in spite of these instructions, there were occasions when priests expressed their anger to fulfil their demands. Especially, when landlords seized the land of the church, priests reacted angrily and expressed it by ringing church bells and throwing the statues of apostles on the grass and demanding justice by prostrating in front of them. Their motive was to threaten landlords to return the seized land or to face the wrath of the apostles.

However, rulers and monarchs were more direct in expressing their anger. Any command issued by a king had to be obeyed as failure to do so meant severe punishment, perhaps even death for the offender. However most ruling houses brought up the future ruler to be kind but strict towards his subjects as, by adopting these two methods, he could rule the country and maintain order and peace.

When medieval historians discuss the anger of peasants and common people, they view it as a negative reaction because their anger always resulted in quarrel, riot. and violence in which people were wounded, often killed. According to historians, if they revolted against authorities, their actions were mostly unsuccessful and increased their own sufferings and pain. They were referred to as savages or violent animals and their revolts were brutally crushed.

Ruling classes looked at revolts as acts of disobedience rather than a justified reaction against exploitation and injustice. The peasant warriors were also condemned because in medieval Europe, waging war was regarded as a privilege of knights, not of peasants

According to Marc Bloch, a French historian, people of medieval Europe were rough and violent by nature and it was difficult to control them by kindness. There were not many moral and ethical values in the society which could help to suppress the brutish nature of people, therefore, they were violent and could only be governed by rendering severe punishments.

European manners changed during the Renaissance when a process of civilisation began which ended the medieval era of brutality. Of course, with the advent of democracy, the situation has changed entirely. Now, rulers are afraid of people's anger and try to satisfy them by accepting their demands.

Invaders and Conquerors

Historical controversies surface again and again in different circumstances and old debates and discussions come alive with a new perspective.

Recently a politician, commenting on the question of heroes, referred to Mohammad Bin Qasim as an invader who led the Arab army for the conquest of Sindh in 711 and to Raja Dahar as the ruler and defender of Sindh who resisted the Arab invasion and died in the battlefield fighting against the invaders. He claimed that his hero is Dahar and not Mohammad Bin Qasim.

Actually this interpretation of history was presented for the first time by G. M. Syed in his booklet Sindh jo soorma or Heroes of Sindh. It was the time when One Unit was declared and Sindh, like other small provinces, merged into it. This led to the rise of Sindhi nationalism. G.M. Syed's indirect message was that Sindh was being invaded again, like it had been by the Arabs, and had lost its independence. Therefore, it should be defended on the model of Raja Dahar to retrieve its lost sovereignty.

Since then, Sindh historians are divided into two groups: nationalists and Islamists. The argument of the nationalists is that Mohammad Bin Qasim was the representative of the Umayyad Empire and invaded Sindh like other imperial powers to plunder the resources of the occupied country. The Islamists' point of view is that as a result of Arab invasion, Sindh converted to Islam. Therefore, Arab occupation was a blessing which made Sindh the Babul Islam or door of Islam to the Indian subcontinent.

As far as the definition of an invader is concerned there is no confusion: anybody who invades another country to usurp its resources and occupy its land is an invader. However, nearly all invading powers have given moral justification for their invasion, generally on the grounds that the rulers of invading countries were oppressive and the masses wanted a deliverer to rescue them from the clutches of their rulers. Therefore, their conquest and occupation fulfilled the wishes of the common people. The same argument is presented in case of the Arab invasion and Raja Dahar is painted in black and presented as an immoral despot. With this interpretation Mohammad Bin Qasim became a deliverer to Sing.

The problem is that history is mostly on the side of victors and the vanquished have no voice to present their position. Arab historians admired and glorified the Arab conquest of Sindh and neglected the point of view of the defeated Sindhis.

Sometimes defeated and forgotten individuals are resurrected from historical oblivion and their role is re-examined and an attempt is made to give them a dignified place in history. Sometimes, they remain unnoticed and wait for a time when they may be recognised as heroes. We have many examples in our history. Alexander, who defeated Porus, was eulogised as a great conqueror by Europeans, partly because he was Greek, while the gallantry of those who fought against him is largely ignored. Intellectually we are so inferior that we also call him great rather than recognising Porus as the defender. Recently, we have built a monument at the bank of Jehlum in memory of our defeat and Alexander's victory. What kind of historical sense does that speak of?

In another example, Mahmud of Ghazna is praised as the great conqueror who invaded India 17 times and defeated the rulers of different kingdoms. His first encounter was with Raja Jaipal who fought against him but

did not surrender. His son Annandpal continued resistance against Mahmud but was finally defeated by him. Both Jaipal and Annandpal are waiting for some historian to bring to light their resistance and sacrifices and place them on the pedestal of heroes. Similarly, Muhammad Ghori fought against Prithviraj whose role, so far, is not recognised by us.

There are also invaders of a different colour. Nadir Shah Afshar invaded India and swept away the wealth of the Mughals. Unfortunately, as he was not owned by the Iranians he never attained the status of a hero. But his follower, Ahmad Shah Abdali, who invaded India several times, was revered by the Afghans and is their national hero.

The simple reason for this contradiction is that when we relate history with religion and nationalism, we sacrifice the rational point of view and justify all acts of 'our side.' The correct view to understand and analyse history is to study it by relating it to power. This would create real consciousness and liberate us from the communal version of history. Invaders and conquerors are a curse to those nations who were invaded It is time to condemn them and place them in the dock of history, not as heroes but plunderers and murderers. This interpretation will change our historical understanding.

Using Fear as a Political Tool

Fear is an inherent part of the human psyche. If there is a natural calamity, man fears death and disaster; if there is a political or economic crisis he fears insecurity, hunger and starvation; if he experiences religious anxiety, he is confronted with the fear of the Day of Judgment and hell fire.

Living in a state of fear weakens him physically and mentally, and shakes his confidence. He becomes pliable in the hands of authorities who want to cast him in a certain ideological mould to be used and exploited politically

Realising the worth of this weapon, conquerors, occupiers and rulers have used fear as a political means to make people submissive and obedient. It was the practice of conquerors to unleash terror in the occupied land and to order massacres to terrorise the people into not putting up resistance and recognising their authority without any challenge. The Romans and the Mongols mercilessly butchered whole populations in occupied towns as a warning to others to surrender. They were successful because seeing this bloodshed, the cities and towns laid down their arms and opened the gates to the invaders to save themselves from destruction.

We see that throughout history rulers have adopted sophisticated methods to create fear among the people by using state institutions. For example, the splendour and glory of the royal court were a manifestation of the power of rulers and were intended to overawe the people. In the history of India. Balban, who ruled from 1266-1286. was famous for organising his court on the pattern of the ancient Persian monarchs in order to assert his legitimacy and deter

people from rebelling. Ziauddin Barani wrote in Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi "Fear and awe of him took possession of all men's hearts."

The display of armed soldiers, decoration of the hall of audience, etiquettes and rituals were so overwhelming that ambassadors and visitors received a shock by the show of wealth and power and sometimes

fainted Balban also used royal processions to impress as well as to create fear in his subjects. According to Barani, "Musalmans and Hindus would come from distances of one or two hundered kos to see the splendour of his entourage, which filled them with amazement."

Espionage was the second instrument to keep people fearful. Nearly all rulers employed spies to report all kinds of activities of the people. When he became a target of conspiracies, Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) used spies to report the movements of his nobles. Such was the network of espionage that nobles ceased to talk to each other suspecting that anyone of them could be a spy. Sometimes they conveyed their message in sign language.

The third instrument was punishment. Rebels and criminals were punished publicly. People were asked to come and witness floggings, hangings or beheadings. In some cases, as a warning, the dead body of a rebel would be displayed for many days and was not allowed to be buried. Michel Foucault in his book Discipline & Punish describes the methods of punishment in the case of regicide in detail "The flesh will be torn ... with red-hot pincers, his right hand holding the knife with which he committed the said parricide ... and on those places where the flesh will be torn away, poured molten lead ... then his body drawn and quartered ... his limbs and body consumed by fire, reduced to ashes and his ashes thrown to the winds."

In the modern period, dictators fully utilised the methods of the past to keep people in a state of fear. Hitler organised his Nazi party to use all such instruments which

could silence the people. Once he said that people needed "a good scare. They want to be afraid of something". Thus the stormtroopers created terror among Hitler's opponents. Gestapo was the secret agency whose task was to trace any critic of the Nazi government, to arrest and summarily execute him.

Such was the terror and horror of these organisations that Hitler's opponents either left the country or maintained complete silence. The judiciary came completely under the control of the Nazi government and sentenced dissidents. Special courts were established and staffed by the loyal judges of the party. Torture and execution without trial were common.

Modern-day dictators followed Hitler's pattern and continued the same brutal methods to silence their opponents. The Shah of Iran and his secret agency Savak were notorious for persecuting dissidents. Israel since 1948 has followed a policy of persecution to create fear among the Palestinians. It is expelling them from their homes in order to occupy their land and launching systematic massacres to eliminate resistance, like past colonial occupiers.

Political fear is the product of brutality and absolute power. That's why it has been used by kings and dictators without popular support. However, in a democratic system, the tools of political fear are diluted and the will of the people dominates coercion. In such a system people are constantly asked not to be afraid to express their views and to act according to their conscience. Of course, a fear-free society would be ideal for society to develop its inner strength and play a creative role.

Perfumed Culture

The use of perfume indicates refinement and sophistication of a civilisation and aesthetic taste of its people. As it was a luxury item and a very expensive one, only the elite classes could afford to use it. In a way, it drew a border line between the rich and the poor. It is interesting to learn how man, using his strong sense of smell, used herbs, roots, and body parts of some animals for preparing perfumes in order to avert bad odour and to stimulate pleasant feelings.

A detailed document, written around 1550BC, about the use of perfumes has been discovered in Egypt which shows that the Egyptians had acquired the skill to use extracts from different plants and flowers to manufacture perfumes for religious as well as secular use. There were edicts which were propagated to encourage people to use perfume. On festive occasions, incense was burnt officially in the streets for the enjoyment of people in pots which were made of clay or glass.

In classical Greece, according to Caius Plinius Secundus (AD23-79), better known as Pliny the Elder, the author of Natural History, people were not aware of perfume. However, later on when they became accustomed to it, they began to overuse it. For that reason, Solon, Athenian statesman and lawmaker, forbade the sale of perfume in Athens and Sparta. However, despite his order, the use continued unabated. The Greeks not only used perfume to make their bodies fragrant but also regarded some perfumes to heal bad hearing.

Frances Kennett, in History of Perfume, writes that "Frankincense was especially valued in Alexandria, and

shops which sold it had to be guarded against thieves. Pliny wrote that the industry of Alexandria was very closely supervised; the factories were watched by officials and the workers were searched before leaving the premises. They also had to wear special clothing (presumably to prevent precious balsam from being polluted)."

The Romans inherited the use of perfume and in the 1st and 2nd centuries its use became very popular. The elite classes perfumed the body as well as their clothes. It is said that Nero used to sleep on a bed of rose petals. It is recorded that the quantity of perfume he used at his wife Poppaea`s funeral was equal to what Arabia could produce in 10 years.

In the Roman Empire, perfume shops were as popular as coffee shops in today`sEngland.

Because of its humid climate the use of perfume in ancient India was widespread. The nobility used perfumes which were made of herbs, roots, and flowers. As flowers were easily available, people used garlands to wear around their necks for fragrance. It was also customary to sprinkle rose water on the guests on their arrival; rubbing their bodies with some perfume was considered a sign of welcoming the guests.

In Persia, rose was used as a source of perfume. In order to obtain roses in large quantities the district of Lur in Fars was reserved for rose cultivation. The rose water of Shiraz was famous as a delicacy.

During the Abbasid period, there were 50 perfume shops in Baghdad which shows its popularity in the Arab world. The Arabs not only improved the manufacturing of perfume but a number of books were also written on its social and cultural aspects.During the 11th and 13th centuries Crusaders brought back the art of manufacturing perfume to Europe. As in the Middle Ages, bathing was neglected resulting in excessive body odour. This promoted the perfume industry, which was not only applied on the

body but jewellery, dresses, gloves and clocks were also perfumed. During the time of Louis XIV perfumed powder for hair was popularised.

We also find the use of spices in food especially in Europe; spices were used not only for aroma but also to preserve food. Frances Kennett writes that "The introduction of spices like cinnamon influenced cuisine even more than the ladies toilet." In India, during the Mughal period and in successive times, rulers particularly preferred food which had a pleasant aroma. Some cooks excelled in the art of using spices in such a way that the aroma of a dish would make the person eat more than usual.

As far as women were concerned, the use of perfume was prohibited for them from the beginning. Socrates justifies it by saying that "for they themselves smell sweet." Pliny in his book remarks that "the highest recommendation of perfume is that when a female passes by, the odour which proceeds from her may possibly attract the attention of those who till then are intent upon something else."

In Hebrew society, the use of perfume by women was condemned; termed 'harlot's ways' by their prophets. However, the condemnation could not deter women from using perfume on their bodies. In Puritan England also, women were forbidden to use it. They believed that it tempted men to seduce women and lure them to commit sin. Same is the attitude of some religious scholars of Islam who discourage women from using perfume while going in public places.

On the other hand, in the West more varieties of perfumes are available for women than for men.

Tools of Terror

James Pruade in *History of England* writes that "Man is the only one to whom the torture and death of his fellow creature is amusing". This raises the question that why is it so? When a person is tortured by the state authority or by the command and order of an organization, the executioner is authorized to use legal or prescribed methods on the victim. Sometimes he goes beyond his authority in order to please his superiors.

However there is a difference between legal torture, which is sponsored by the state, and the torture which is committed by social, political, or criminal gangs against those who disobey or betray them. In this case, there is revenge and hatred which motivate them to persecute their victim. In both cases, the process is first to dehumanize the victim by accusing or blaming him for heinous crimes. Once this is done, it becomes easy to torture him without any pity or mercy he no longer remains a fellow being but transforms into an evil creature and a threat of their own existence.

It is said that the main motive of torture and discipline society. Therefore there are different categories of torture for violation of social rules. It was an old practice to torture criminals to extract confessions. The Roman legalized it before a trial. Political dissidents were tortured to renounce their views and were forced to recognize the existing structure with a promise not to challenge it again. In the medieval period,, political rebels were regarded as personal enemies of the rulers and hence punished severely. Heretics or the followers of a new religion were considered a serious threat to society; therefore, they were hunted and

persecuted in the name of peace and order. During the colonial period, nationalists were imprisoned and tortured to suppress their freedom struggle. The cold war era saw the persecution of communists in most of the Asian and African countries.

In the ancient and medieval periods, the methods of torture were brutal and the victims underwent a slow and painful death, The Egyptian, the Greeks, the Persian, and the Romans al invented different kinds of torture techniques. For example, binding a person top a stake and letting him die of thirst, starvation or being eaten by wild birds. In ancient China, besides many other methods, there was the notorious practice of 'death of a thousand cuts' where the victim's flesh was cut from all over his body. The Chinese also practiced sawing a man in half.

Jean Kellaway, in *The History of Torture and Evolution* writes about the practice of branding which existed in ancient babylonia in 2000 B.C. and was followed by the Greek, the Romans and the Europeans. The victims were branded on the cheeks, forehead or shoulders and the letters used identified their crimes; F for frymaker, M for manslaughter, P for perjurer, R for rogue, S for slave, SI for seditious libeler, SS for sowing sedition, and T for thief.

Generally, victims were tortured in public in order to show the power of the state over its citizens. Hanging, burning at stake, stabbing and flogging were common features of torture. In ancient China and medieval Europe the pillory was adopted to publicize the crimes of a victim. One historian calls this the forerunner or newspapers. . One of the aspects of torture was when the mob took the law in hands. Everyone became the executioner. The victim was often not jut tortured but put to death by beating or hanging. Lynching (Lynch was the name of the judge who favoured the mob's justice) was the method adopted in America against the black slaves.

The irony is thaty torture has not been abondened in spite of human advancement and progress. The only differences is that in the past it was conducted in the open; now it is carried out in secrecy behind the curtain. Moreover, it has become more refined and sophisticated. New technology is providing modern tools and gadgets of torture. Although there arte organizations which are campaigning against the use o torture, the USA, after 9/11. Has been known to set up torture camps outside its boundaries. In Israel, the judiciary legalized the torture of Palestinians in the name of the state security.

As far as Pakistan is concerned every police station is a torture chamber for suspects and police officers are believed to amuse themselves by torturing themselves by torturing their victims in the name of the state authority. Though the notorious torture cell at *Shahi* fort, which experienced the cries and shrieks of political prisoners during successive military dictatorships. Has been closed, the practice has not been abounded.

Another irony is that some student organizations and political groups have adopted these practices against their opponents and tortures chambers are believed to exist in hostels, where those who dare to challenge their authority at campus are forced into submission. In the wake of collapsing state authority we have witnessed mob justice when some robbers were caught. Beaten up and burnt alive. Torture survives in those societies whose social and political structure is weak thus they resort to torture to silence those who challenge their authority. We have witnessed but they all failed to suppress the sprit of freedom which resurfaced again and again with a new force and vitality.

Torture in the name of religion

In every religion there occurs, from time to time, a revivalist movement that seeks to purify the religion of irreligious and polluted practices and rituals. Those who undertake this task, generally adopt two methods: One is to persuade the faithful to understand the original teachings and follow them; the other is to coerce and force them to abandon heretic practices and accept the extremists' version of religion.

This creates two points of view in society: one is the evolutionary concept of religion in which cultural practices are integrated without any contradiction into the original teachings of religion. In the other, all those practices which are not according to the original teachings are deemed irreligious and eliminated.

The movement for purification which was launched by Christianity in the 12th and 13th centuries was different because it was led by the church and not by any individual or group of extremists. The church, as an institution, realised that many non-Christian practices were distorting the teachings of Jesus Christ. These were the practices which the people of Europe inherited from the Roman society and its culture and continued to observe them even after their conversion to Christianity. At the same time some sects emerged whose ideologies were contrary to the policy of the church. In the eyes of the church all such attempts were profane; therefore, it was decided to bring them back to the fold, first by persuasion, and if that did not work, then by coercion and force.

However, sermons and even excommunication failed to convince the dissident sects and individuals to

recognise the supremacy of the church. Therefore, in 1231, Pope Gregory IX instituted the Inquisition to take severe action against dissidents and heretics and assert the authority of the church and the Pope. The main attempt was to root out heresy which was defined as: "an opinion chosen by human faculties, contrary to Holy Scripture, openly taught and pertinaciously defended."

The Dominicans, a religious order founded in 1216, and the Franciscans, founded in 1209, were assigned the task to suppress heresy with the help of the inquisition. In 1252, torture was sanctioned to extract confessions. This empowered the inquisition authorities to use torture in the name of religion, believing that they were working for a higher spiritual cause.

The Inquisition officers visited villages carrying crucifixes as an emblem of religious authority; after gathering inhabitants together they delivered a sermon and then asked them to identify the heretics and those who committed religious offences. A one month period of grace was given to confess and recant heresy; those who did not change their ways during this period were brought before the inquisition court for trial. Those who confessed their sin were allowed to come to the fold. Those who refused were tried.

First they were denounced by the local church and their neighbours, then two witnesses were rounded up to prove their act of heresy. Generally, the names of the witnesses were kept secret. Sometimes their testimony was recorded under threat of torture or bribery. Trial began with torture which included the use of iron boots, thumbscrews and flogging.

With the passage of time more innovative methods of torture were invented by the authorities. Such was the fear that nobody dared to say a word in favour or in defence of the victim. Heresy was a charge which could be easily applied by the inquisition authorities against anyone. If a

person was wealthy, his property and wealth were confiscated. Moreover, he had to pay all the expenses of his trial. If he was found guilty, the verdict was announced in public and the victim was handed over to secular authorities to execute the punishment. Generally, the punishment was to burn at the stake.

We find in the history of inquisitions that rich and propertied people and those who were pursuing scholarly studies were often hunted by religious authorities. By prosecuting rich people the church sought to confiscate their wealth and enrich itself; scholars and scientists became victims because they were suspected of undermining the teachings of the church by encouraging free thinking which could become a challenge to its authority.

In 1492 when Spain was conquered by the Christian powers, Muslims and Jews were asked either to convert or leave. Those who converted to escape from persecution were closely watched by the Spanish Inquisition. They were tortured and forced to confess that they had misled the authorities by false conversion.

Even the Knights Templar, who were a product of the Crusades and had established their credentials as the true followers of Christ, could not save themselves from the inquisition. The order had become very influential through accumulation of immense wealth and hence became a challenge, not only to the church but also to the rulers. They were declared heretics, their wealth was confiscated and they were burnt at the stake.

However, Pope Sixtus IV realised that the reputation of the church was being maligned due to the inquisitions. Therefore, he wrote a letter to Ferdinand V of Castile saying that: "The inquisition has been moved not by zeal for faith but by lust for wealth" and that "many true and faithful Christians have without any legitimate proof been imprisoned, tortured and condemned as heretics."

lowever, such was the influence and power of inquisition ıaı in spite of the Pope's doubts, it continued its function, ntil being gradually abolished, through 1758 to 1820.

Among the scientists, Copernicus (d. 1543) was ·ondemned by the church and his theories were deemed to ›e against the Holy Scriptures. In 1614, the church lenounced Galileo and in 1633 imprisoned him in his ›use for life. The Church realised its mistake in 1992 and ıabilitated him with this statement by the Pope that: "a ıcere believer who showed to be more perceptive in this ›ard than the theologians who opposed him."

Shades of Violence

Violence is an integral part of the history of human kind and has played an important role in shaping and destroying societies with far reaching consequences. There are different forms of violence: for example, it was used for human survival to get food, to resolve disputes and conflicts, to take revenge against opponents to react against injustice and exploitation, to terrorize and dominate defeated people in order to rule over them, and to get sadistic pleasure and satisfaction by watching gory scenes.

Keeping in view these different aspects, psychologists raise the question that whether violence is inherent in human psyche or it's a product of circumstances? 'Sigmund Freud in *Civilization and its Discontent* writes that "men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love, which simple defends if attacked; rather, a powerful measures of desire for aggression has to be reckoned as part of their instinctual endowment. The result is that their neighbor is to them not only a possible helper or sexual object, but also temptation to gratify their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity to work without recompense, to use him sexually without his consent , to seize his possession, to humiliate him, to cause him pain to torture and kill him. Man is a wolf to Man".

For thousands of years man killed animals for food. To kill them he invented violent weapons such as bow and arrow, spear, knife, and dagger. As he improved his weapons, his skills to kill animals and birds also increased which he later on used to fight against fellow human beings, to seize their property and occupy their land. War

became a regular feature and attempts were made to glorify those who committed murder and massacred people. It became an acceptable custom to loot, plunder and kill the defeated people without any mercy or remorse.

In the ancient period, the Assyrians assumed a reputation for being ruthless fighters and blood thirsty opponents.

They built their empire by defeating their neighbours and brutally killing them. One of the Assyrian kings described his account of war. "With their twenty thousand warriors and their five kings I fought, and I defeated them... Let their blood flow in the valleys and on high levels of mountains. I cut off their head outside their cities, like heaps of grain I piled them... I burned their cities with fire, I demolished them".

The barbarity of war continued throughout history. The Mongols slaughtered the defeated armies and built pillars of their skulls. Babur proudly mentions in *Baburnama* that he followed the tradition of his illustrious ancestors and built pillars of the skulls of slain soldiers. In spite of the growth of civilization, acts of violence during war did not disappear. The Jew who experienced gas chambers and the holocaust are replicating the same in their suppression of Palestinians.

Violence has also been a source of pleasure. The Romans were fond of watching gladiators fight and at the end of it applauded the victor and announced the death of the defeated by turning down their thumbs. Not satisfied with gladiator fights, they also liked to watch criminals, dissidents and/or rebels be thrown to wild animals who immediately tore them to pieces.

Animal fight was also a favorite game. It continued through the ages in different forms. The Mughals rulers were fond of elephant fights and watched it in their leisure time. Cock or dog is still a pastime for ordinary people.

In medieval Europe, public hanging and execution was a great source of entertainment. When the victim was brought to the place of hanging, a people gathered and tried to get a place near the scaffold. For officials and elite classes, seats were reserved on the platform. At the time of hanging they applauded and whistled in order to show their approval. Charles Dicken summed up his behavior by saying "No sorrow, no salutary horror, no abhorrences, no seriousness, nothing but ribaldry, debauchery, levity, drunkenness and daunting vice in fifty other ways".

The place would be crowded by all types of men – beggars, prostitutes, and ordinary people – who perhaps, having no entertainment in their life, watched hangings and executions with excitement. On occasions when the hanging was cancelled in the nick of time and the condemned man was pardoned the crowded reacted against it as they were deprived of their pleasure and protested to the authorities.

In Europe, with the growth of civilization, pubic hanging and executions came to an end. Unfortunately, in Pakistan it was revived by Ziaul Haq when public flogging and hangings took place. Sadly, there was no protest against these barbaric shows in the modern era; the Taliban adopted it in the name of religion and to assert their authority. They succeeded in terrorizing people by chopping heads and slaughtering their helpless victims.

It appears that in spite of the growth of civilization, we have not been able to get rid of violence. It is perhaps a part of human psyche as well as a product of social, political and economic forces. In the absence of any political solution, it is still regarded as a solution to ethnic, religious, and political disputes. Both the powerful as well as weak, resort to violence to settle their scores. There are the Geneva Convention, human rights agencies, and UNO resolutions to combat violence but so far all these efforts have failed to check it. We are daily experiencing suicide

bombings, explosions, and gun battles in which innocent people become victims. Consequently full security is provided to the ruling classes while the common people are left to become targets of terrorism.

Sectarian Understanding

No religion remains monolith or sustains its originality for too long a time. It splits into several sects when people find no space for their social, political, cultural or economic role. As a result of it they form a new sect to fulfill their aspirations. Therefore, the process of making sects becomes a permanent feature in all religions.

The sects survive all odds and maintain their existence while some disappear into the oblivion of history after accomplishing their object.

Throughout history religious sects have faced problems because once they separate from the main body of religion, the majority of the followers regard this act as heresy and act of rebellion against the unity of faith. It condemned an act that creates chaos and confusion and pollutes the purity of religion. Therefore, there are two choices for _____ident sects; either to retire to some isolated place and practice their beliefs unhindered or to live separately from the majority and adopt secrecy in observing their teachings. In both cases, the image of religious sects becomes negative. They are dubbed as conspirators who continuously try to de-establish the religious majority and weaken its power. The leaders of orthodox beliefs often launch a campaign against the sect and accuse their practices of being immoral and unethical and in violation of basic religious tenets. The main motive is to keep common believers away from it.

If a religious sect attempts to increase its following by propagating its teachings, it challenges orthodoxy which, as an action unleashes a war of accusations against

the sect. Emotions of the common people are mobilised to counter its propaganda.

Under these circumstances, dissident religious sects adopt a policy of secrecy. They do not disclose their beliefs to the general public. Sometimes their teachings are so deeply philosophical that it becomes impossible for a common man to comprehend.

As the society does not mast a heretic sect. its members are not allowed to be appointed to higher posts in the establishment, therefore, mostly, they resort to independent professions, such as trade and commerce to keep their independence. Since, they cannot rely on external support, the sect follows a policy of taking care of its members in case of financial or social crisis.

Another characteristic of sects which emerged during the medieval period of the Islamic world was the messianic concept. It reflected the political and social ideas of the period when people in general had no sense of power; therefore they delegated all authority to one individual who could solve their problems. Moreover, as nearly all sects recalled against orthodoxy, they tried to subvert the political system and gain power. For this reason, we find them asking an active role in all major rebellions against the Umayyad and Abbasids.

However, once they came to power in some areas as the aramits in Bahrain and the Fatimids in Egypt, they established their own religious domination based on their extremist ideas. However, the Fatimids never tried to coerce people who were under their rule to convert though they sent their religious missions to different Islamic countries for preaching and conversion.

Then there was the case of the Ismaili sect which kept its beliefs hidden from the main Sunni body. Their religious books were not available to the general public so outsiders could not study their religious views. They suffered a set back when their centre at Alamout was

captured by Halaku Khan and then precious library was destroyed.

Thus historians, and experts had very little information about them, and they remained a mystery to the general public. Consequently myths about their history and beliefs began to circulate and charmed the common people. Marco Polo propagated the myth of paradise at Alamoul. The group of *Fidain* or *Hashishya* became a topic of many stories and novels which constructed at times a romantic and at times a horrible image of the Ismailies who established a reign of terror in the Middle East.

After a long time of secrecy, Ismaili literature was, for time first time, collected by it Russian scholar, W. Ivanov. Once the literature was available, scholars were keen to learn about the sect and its ideology. That was the beginning of the new image of the sect.

At present, there is distrust and misunderstanding among the followers of different sects. To alleviate these differences, it is important to study their history and how and why these sects evolved their beliefs in order to adjust their spiritual and social needs. In fact, differences do not cause disintegration but create new ideas which are required for the advancement of any society.

Religious Parties Political Agenda

Generally, the perception of religious parties about society is that it is corrupt, misguided, and full of evil parties.

Therefore, they believe that without their guidance, political leaders would lead people astray, and as a result would plunge into debauchery and heinous sins.

This perception is based on the belief that man is evil by nature and he can be controlled and reformed only by religious teachings assisted by legal and political power.

There are two approaches adopted by religious parties to reform society. One is to preach to people to follow religion in its ritual forms. The second approach is to apply their policy from above by emphasizing the use of coercive, methods with the help o state power to force people to observe religious teachings. Those religious parties who believe that by preaching and persuasion, the morals of people could be corrected assume that this process would change the world slowly in their favour and in the end there would be no social or political problem. The Tablighi Jamaat is an adherent of this approach; while other religious parties strive to capture political power and then to implement their agenda.

Nazish Brohi in her book, The *MMA Offensive: Three Years in Power (2003-2005)* analyses the MMA's political process to come to power. Realizing that no single religious party, in spite of its organization and discipline such as Jamaat-e-Islami, can win elections single-handedly, all major religious parties decided to form a coalition to contest elections in 2002 jointly. Nearly all religious parties which are in the coalition believe that they could

implement their religious agenda only with the help of state power and its institutions. This assessment is based on the experience of their support to the military rule of Ziaul Haq who started the process of Islamization which changed the whole structure of Pakistani society. Taking advantage of the support of the military dictator, they Islamized the institution of the army, the bureaucracy, education and the media. In 2002, they already had enough support from different sections of society.

The military government of General Musharraf also needs their support as did Zia ul Haq. General Musharraf has no constituency except the support of the army. In the absence of the leadership of two major political parties – the PPP and the Muslim League (N) – the ground was open for them to win the election. It was the first time that so many religious leader were elected to the National Assembly and Senate. The MMA formed its government in NWFP and Baluchistan. The eldership of MMA is shrewd and knows how to use religion as a tool to get its demand fulfilled. To demoralize the top political leadership, it always accuses it of being Ahmadies. As Nazish point out, Shaukat Aziz was apologetic and declared in a press conference: "I am a Sunni Muslim, and a firm believer of the finality of the Prophethood. "Such is the peruse and influence of these religious parties that the ruling classes speak the same religious language as spoken by the *ulama.* That happened when religious leaders tore the draft of the *Hudood* ordinance into pieces. The ruling classes accused them of dissertation of the Holy Quran and *hadith.*

Another tactic of the religious parties is to get popular support by mobilizing the religious sentiments of the common people. They do not miss any opportunity to demonstrate their religious affiliation.

Publication of the cartoons of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the remarks of the Pope are two examples. The religious parties organized huge rallies and showed and

showed their street power to the government. As Nazish points out, the first victim of the MMA's agenda is women. Like the Taliban, their government in NWFP requires of women to wear the veil and not come out in public places. They also started a campaign against cultural activities such as music dance, theatre and drama. Their government especially took action against TV, cinema and other cultural shows. Which they thought would pollute the morals of the people. As a result, there is a show of religiosity rather than a sincere desire to actually solve the basic problem of the people.

Concluding her study, Nazish rightly points out: "As true of most forms of identity politics, the myriad of societal injustices and political marginalization finds expression in fundamentalism through reactive political Islam. Injustices, power imbalances and extremism are man-made, and can be righted with political, actions. "

Muslim Rulers and Non-Muslims

Societies are composed of varying racial, ethnic and linguistic elements. There is no such thing as a monopolistic society based on one consolidated unit. These elements divide a society into different communities and units and create in them a different sense of identity.

Historically, relations between Hindus, Muslims and other religions communities in the India subcontinent have never remained the same, but have continued to change in response to political, social and economic challenges.

During the rule of Muslim dynasties in India, two elements played an important role in determining their policies and attitude towards the Hindus and other religious communities: the rulers and the *ulema*. When the Arabs conquered Sindh in 711, the question that the conquerors faced was how to treat the non-Muslims of India who were not 'people of the book' like the Jews and the Christians. Muslims faced the same problem after the conquest of Iran, whose population was Zoroastrian. At that time, Muslim jurists issued a religious decree according to which the conquered people of Iran were to be accepted as the 'people of the book' and were to enjoy the status of *zimmi*, in which capacity they were required to pay *jizya* or protective tax (poll tax).

On the question of the status of non-Muslims of India, Hajjah, the governor of Basra who supervised the conquest of Sindh, asked Muhammad bin Qasim to treat them like the people of Iraq and Iran. So, the policy to recognize the non-Muslims of India as 'people of the book' was adopted by the Arabs in Sindh. It was that policy

which was later continued by the sultans of Delhi and Mughal emperors.

The question whether the Hindus should be recognized as 'people of the book' arose during the period of Iltutnish (1211-1236) when some *ulema*, who had migrated from Central Asia and taken refuge in India objected to this policy and demanded that they should be treated as infidels. They also demanded that they should be given the choice of either converting to Islam or face death. TO this, the *wazir* of the sultan replied that there were not enough swords in the armoury of the sultan to kill the entire Hindu population. To pacify them, the ulemas were assured that the Hindus would be treated with contempt.

We find two trends in the Muslim community towards non-Muslim: the ruling classes and the people. The former fully realized that they could not rule over the majority of the population while keeping them humiliated and that it was only expedient to treat the Hindus well. This policy later led the ruling classes to be more inquisitive about the Hindu religion and culture.

Firuz Tugluq (1351-1388) was the first ruler who made a practical attempt in this direction. When he conquered Nagarkot and there found an excellent library, he ordered all the manuscripts to be protected and preserved. Nearly 300 books in Sanskrit were translated into Persian and Arabic. Tugluq was also fascinated by Hindu culture and when he saw two pillars of Asoka at Meeruth and Topra, he ordered them to be brought to Delhi and placed near the royal palace.

One of the contemporary historians, Shams Siraj Afif, explains how the Topra pillar was brought to Delhi: "When the foundation of the pillar was examined, a large square stone was found as a base which was also taken out. The pillar was encased from top to bottom in reed and raw skins, so that no damage might accrue to it. A carriage of 42 wheels was constructed and ropes were attached to each

wheel. Thousands of men hauled at every rope, and after great labour and difficulty the pillar was raised on to the carriage...by simultaneous exertion of so many thousands of men the carriage was moved, and was brought to the banks of the Jumna. Here the sultan came to meet it." These two pillars were brought to the capital of archeology, as there was no concept of how and why a monument of the past should be preserved.

Babur (1526-1530), the first Mughal ruler, left a testament to his successors instructing them not to sacrifice cows in India as they were regarded as sacred by the Hindus. Akbar not only Indianised the Mugal dynasty and integrated Central Asian and Indian cultures, but in order to understand the Hindu religion, also ordered the translation of Hindu religious books into Persian Abul Fazl, the court historians of Akbar, commenting on this venture, writes that the motive of the king was that the holy books of both the religions should be translated into each other's languages so that Hindus and Muslim could make joint efforts to search to search for truth and abandon prejudice and hatred.

Akbar's poicy of *sulh-i-kul*, or peace with all, was the base of the integrated culture in India. According to Akbar's concept of kingship, a ruler should not be confined to one religious community but protect al his subjects, irrespective of their religion and creed. This policy was followed by Akbar's successors till the end of dynasty.

At the people's level, there was cultural assimilation and integration. Those Hindu communities who converted to Islam brought their cultural tradition and practices along with them. They also influenced those Muslims who came from outside and gradually adapted Indian cultural practices and participated in cultural festivals.

Ulema's attitude towards Hindus

In the Indian subcontinent, while the Muslim rulers followed the policy of toleration, people of both sides interacted culturally with each other. However, the class of *ulema* opposed both toleration as well as assimilation of the two cultures. During the period of the Sultan of Delhi, Fakhr Mudabbir, the author of *Adab al Harb* wa Shuja'at advised the rulers to continuously fight holy wars against the infidels. In cases of apostasy severe punishments were recommended. He further advised that only those Muslims should be appointed on high government posts who were pious and virtous.

Similar views were expressed by another known as Sayyid b. Shihan Hamdani (d.1384) in his book *Zakhirat al-Muluk*. He asked the Muslim rulers o maintain a distinction between Muslims and *simmis*. The Muslim rulers should not allow the Hindus to build their temples. *Zimmis* should nether be permitted to wear garb similar to the Muslims nor to have names like them. Ahmad Sirhindi propagated the same policy during the Mughal period and vehemently opposed any social and cultural relationship with the Hindus. He asked the Muslims to sacrifice cows in India as a religious duty.

As long as the rulers remained powerful, the voice of the ulema was weak. The rulers kept politics and religion apart and seldom made attempts tointegerate both. However, when the political power of the ruling classes declined, the *ulema* asserted their domination. In the 18[th] century, Shah Waliullah initiated the campaign to motivate the rulers to follow a religious policy by alienating the Muslims from the Hindus. It was followed later on by his

son Shah Abdul Aziz and his disciple Sayyid Ahmed Shahees. Shah Ismail Shaheed especially launched a campaign to purify Islam of Hindu practices. Since then, the argument that the cause of the Muslim downfall in India was due to adoption of Hindu culture became popular. And the solution to revive the old glory was to purify Islam of un-Islamic rituals and practices.

During the colonial period, when Muslim political power came to an end, the *ulema* emerged as the sole power to protect the religious identity of the Muslims. The Deoband *madrassa* in its early stages (1867) opposed any social or cultural contact with the Hindus.

Many religious organizations emerged with different sectarian views, opposing the Hindus and making attempts to revive Islam of the earliest days while advising the Muslims to abandon Hindu rituals and cultural practices.

The colonial rulers took full advantage of these religious differences and divided the people as Hindus and Muslim communities, having no social or cultural links with each other. The Hindu community was defined by the colonials as vegetarian, peaceful and cowardly, while the Muslims were described as meat-eaters, notorious, and trouble makers.

They also divided history on a religious basis as Hindu and Muslim periods. This division and the concept of Muslim rule became attractive to the Muslims of India and it became a matter of pride that they had ruled over India for a thousand years and had kept the Hindus as their slaves.

From a historical point of view, this belief is totally wrong as mediaeval India was not ruled by the Muslims alone. There were Hindu dynasties, which were ruling in different parts of India. Secondly, the ruling classes did not consist only of Muslims, as there also were Hindu elite classes that had become a party of the ruling elite. As far as

the Hindu and Muslim masses were concerned, they were treated equally as subjects. A Muslim peasant or artisan had no special privilege because of his region.

This policy of toleration and integration of rulers ended with their decline leaving few traces, while the *ulema* asserted the anti-Hindu policy and successfully made it a core issue during the Indian independence struggle. It suited the politicians who feared the domination of the Hindu majority in a new democratic set up. The *ulema* became the custodians of the religious identity of the Muslims.

After the partition, we inherited this legacy. That is why we narrate and analyse the entire Indian history in the perspective of the Hindu-Muslim conflict. Our two-nation theory is also based on these differences and the Hindu hostility of old days has only been given new anti-India direction. This attitude is evident in our textbooks, newspapers and electronic media.

In the present context, it is necessary to change our concept of the 'other' from hostility to friendship. But this is an arduous task.

Our politicians have not failed to normalize the situation, but also have contributed to its aggravation for populist ends. It is u to the intellectuals on both sides to try to change this mindset.

Is Sufism relevant to our time?

There are some people who, in view of the present religious extremism, believe that if Sufi teachings are revived, religious intolerance and fundamentalism may be controlled. The attempt to revive the past system and old ideas is not a new phenomenon. Those societies which are backward and have no creative and innovative capability to come up with new ideas and thoughts in response to new challenges look around and search for some old and used ideas as tools to solve their problems.

Marx's comment in this regard, in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, is very relevant. He writes that "And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language."

Thus, those who argue about the usefulness of past, fail to realise that every system is the product of a specific time and space. It plays its role and, after that, becomes redundant. Changing circumstances require new and fresh responses to meet the emerging challenges.

In the subcontinent Sufism flourished in the 13th century almost at the same time as the establishment of Turkish rule in India. It was the period of struggle against the local rulers who were fighting to check the political domination

of the invaders. At this critical juncture, the Sultans of Delhi needed the spiritual support of the Sufis to inspire their soldiers to fight against the infidels. That's why they supported the Sufis and sought their blessing in case of war as well as in any crisis.

Two leading Sufi orders Chishtiya and Surawardiya played an important role during the Sultanate period. Their philosophy of wahdat al wujud created religious tolerance and checked religious conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims. The same policy was followed by the rulers who fully realised that they could not sustain the occupation relying only on military power. The subjugated people need to be assured that they would be treated with tolerance. The khanqahs and shrines of Sufi saints established a parallel system to keep the people satisfied with the political system.

Generally, Sufis do not incite the people to rebellion or encourage them to protest against the rulers. They exhorted the people to endure sufferings and seek spiritual salvation for their worldly problems. Submission and obedience were principles which were observed by their disciples. Realising their spiritual importance, Sultans and the nobility built monasteries for them and financially supported them to maintain their establishment. The Sufis always relied on the donation of the rulers or nobles. This is how the Sufis of the Sultanate period supported the political system and never raised a voice against it.

However, the situation changed during the Mughal period. Once Akbar extended his empire and consolidated the power of the Mughal dynasty, the Mughal Emperors didn't need the support of Sufi saints and their blessing. Akbar briefly expressed his devotion to Shaikh Salim Chishti and Khawaja Moinuddin, but he did not involve them in his political affairs. He brought the Hindus and Muslims

together politically and socially following the policy of sulh-i-kul or peace with all. It created a shared culture and shared history in which both communities equally contributed. It continued throughout the Mughal rule. Thus, tolerance was achieved politically without any assistance of the Sufis, putting the Sufis in the background rather than in the forefront. The emperors were not pursuing them for any blessing. Dara Shikok's interest in Sufism was more academic than a means to apply it in practical politics. And we can see that his Sufi mentors did not save him from his disaster.

Interestingly, with the decline of the Mughal Empire the institution of Sufism also declined. During the later Mughal period when there was political anarchy and social breakdown, a large number of fake Sufis emerged who were fooling people with their tricks. With the collapse of the political system and social values, both the rich and the poor, in a state of helplessness, began to believe that Sufis, who impressed them by keeping long hair, wearing saffron coloured dress and numerous stone rings on their fingers, would solve their day to day problems through their spiritual power. However, the whole scene changed during the colonial period and establishment of their political system. Political stability relegated Sufism to an insignificant position.

Those in Pakistan, who are interested in fighting against religious extremism, should first understand it in the present context and then encounter it with fresh ideas to change the political and social structure of the society. Society can neither be reformed by reviving old and rusted ideas nor by delivering sermons and reciting Sufi poetry.

Religious Revivalism

Why is there a religious resurgence in South Asia especially in the Indian subcontinent? Is it a modern phenomenon or has it deep roots in our Culture and history? To understand this, we have to analyse the historical process which caused the emergence of religious fanaticism. History shows that people need a tool and a weapon to fight, resist and struggle against exploitation and injustice. For example, when, the struggle against colonialism was going on in India, political parties chose nationalism to resist foreign domination, because it provided a wide base to accommodate all types of religious, ethnic and tribal groups, and different layers of castes. Later on, communalism created some division on the basis of religion, but nationalism proved to be an effective tool against the British Raj in creating political consciousness which, consequently, led to independence.

However, nationalism lost its influence and credibility after independence when it was used by the ruling lasses to fulfill their agenda and miserably failed to solve the problems of the common people. The failure of nationalism provided a space to the religious parties in South Asian countries to attract people to their platform.

Besides nationalism, another ideology that played an important role in the politics was socialism. Its triumph in 1917 as a result of the Russian Revolution divided the world into two blocks, capitalist and socialist. As both ideologies were theoretical powerful and spawned intensive intellectual debates, dialogue and discussions, religion was relegated to a very insignificant position. However, religion was used as a tool by the capitalist powers during the Cold

War to counter and resist the spread of communism and socialism, especially in the Third World countries, where religious parties were fully supported to inculcate religious sentiments in, people and condemn socialism as a godless ideology. However, intellectual and political groups were divided on the basis of capitalist or socialist ideologies. At this juncture, religious identity remained hidden under the layers of cultural, ethnic, and national identities.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, socialist ideology suffered a great deal. With its fall disappeared debates, discussions, and the motivation to change the world. The leftist ideology provided a broader space to all groups and individuals to integrate with each other without any discrimination on the basis of religion, race, creed or ethnicity. It united them or, the basis of the struggle against imperialism and exploitation. Its failure left are ideological and political vacuum - a vacuum of ideas, of identity, and of motivation. The capitalist world announced the 'end of history', which meant the final triumph of its system. Later on, the imperial powers indulged in arched conflicts in the name of a 'clash of civilisations', justifying their war as morally correct and in the larger interest of humanity.

Under these circumstances, religion surfaced as an alternative ideology and was used by religious parties to determine identity and also as a weapon to resist imperialism.

As most religions are far behind social, cultural, political and economic processes, attempts are being made to reinterpret and reconstruct them in order to adjust to new challenges. The led to the modernsation of religion. However, there are religious scholars who believe that there is no need to change, amend or reshape religions as they were competent to guide their disciples in all circumstances. This group is known as revivalist. They believe in the purity of religious teaching and oppose readjustment to modern times. As they believe in purity

they consider those who oppose them as misguided and make efforts to bring them to their fold. These revivalists are also known as fundamentalists, zealots, fanatics, and extremists.

The problem with the religious ideology is that there is no space to accommodate to the 'other'. It excludes all religious minorities as well as those sects which do not agree with their beliefs. Moreover, religious revivalists look back to the past as an ideal society. To them, there is no forward-looking approach. This narrows their outlook and thinking. Once they fad to convince or win over the other, they resort to 'violence against their opponents.

The South Asian countries are suffering from this phenomenon, which has divided their societies into a number of religious groups who are fighting against each other for power and domination. They are using all their efforts to control state institutions for the propagation of their ideas. If the state is controlled by them, they make and attempt to change society from above, as happened in the case of BJP in India. India was saved from these fanatics only because its democratic institutions are strong. The defeat of BJP has changed the political scene in India. What would happen to Pakistan if religious parties come to power and control state institutions to implement their agenda? As our democratic traditions and institutions are not strong, extremist ideas would remain unchallenged and bring disaster to our society.

The Question of Conversion

Recently, Pope Benedict XVI commented on the conversion of Islam and *jihad* with reference to the Byzantinian Emperor Manuel II (1350-1425) who experienced the Ottoman's invasion of his capital Constantinople. He also suffered humiliation as a Turkish prisoner. Therefore his views about Islam were shaped as a result of his personal experience and political situation of his time. We must keep in mind that the Arabs and Turks were great empire builders. They expanded their territories at the expense of the Christian powers. That is why their image in the eyes of their adversaries was of warriors and invaders. As these conquerors and missionaries, the general impression people into Islam by coercion. The Muslim court historians also strengthened this view that their patron rulers invaded and conquered countries because of Islam and not for political ambitions. This raised the status of the conquerors to holy warriors.

During the Western colonial period, this image suited the Christian missionaries who also propagated it widely in an attempt to criticize Islam. The early historians of Islam such as the German Orientalist Wellhausen repeated it and, as a result, it was popularly believed that Islam was spread by the sword and not by peaceful means. The Muslim scholars of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Rejected it and tried to present their case passionately, but it failed to convince the Western audience.

However, the interpretation of history changes with new evidence. Bow, the Western Orientalists have reached the conclusion that it was wrong to assume that Islam was

spread by force. The new historical material shows a different picture. The Muslim conquerors were not interested in converting the defeated people. In Syria, Iraq and Egypt which were conquered by the Arabs, people continued to observe their ancestral religions long after the Arab occupation of their countries. Up to the 8th century, only 10 per cent population of these countries was Muslim. They resided in cities, while in the rural areas, a majority of the people followed wither Christianity or Judaism without any disturbance.

The conversion was not sudden, but very slow.

Historians trace the process of conversion by studying the changes of names. They also point out that among the Jews, the Christians and the Zoroastrains, there were many common religious and social rituals and practices such as slaughtering of animals, fasting and prayers, which made conversion easy. The other reasons that led to conversion were the sectarian differences in the Christian community and the weakness of the Church, which was the result of the end of patronisation by government and subsequent reduction in finances. Further, as a result of the new political and social setup, their own civil and religious institutions broke down and distingerated. Moreover, the landed aristocracy had lost its powers and influence, which was the backbone of their support. All these causes plus political gains to become a part of the rulers lured them to conversion.

As the Jewish community was strong, there was less conversion among the Jews. One thing is certain that there were no organized missions in Islamic society to preach Islam. The conquerors were more interested in occupying land and getting *jazya* from the non-Muslim subjects rather than to force them to become Muslim. In the Indian subcontinent, the Arab conquerors of Sindh did not convert people by force. Islam spread because of the tribal structure of Sindhi society. The usual process was that when a tribal

leader for the sake of political advantage decided to convert to Islam, his tribe followed him. Again it was a slow process.

Richard M. Eaton wrote an excellent book on the *Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier (1204-1760)*. His argument is that as the society of East Bengal was tribal, the early *sufis* who settled there, along with their disciples cleared the forests for cultivation of rice and wheat, which, consequently, changed the condition of the tribal people, who settled and adopted agriculture as the source of their livehood. The *sufis* were the holy men whose blessing was needed for more agricultural products. This process led them slowly to change their religious beliefs. They revered the *sufi* in their lifetime and made their tombs shrines after their death as places of pilgrimage. The *sufi* could not converted the people of West Bengal where Brahmanism was well-organized and the caste system was rigid.

Interestingly, during the Mughal period, the right of conversion was of the emperor, and he used it as a punishment against prisoners of war. They were given the choice either to become Muslim or face death. In South East, Islam spread because of the Muslim traders who visited there. There were no conquerors and invaders, but peaceful merchants who had commercial contact with the people. The conversion must have been slow and not sudden.

It is said that the present Pope, who is a scholar of theology, repeats the outdated argument in a situation when already, there are a lot of misunderstandings between the Christian and the Muslim world.

Patriarchy and women

Simply defined, patriarchy is the rule or control of the father over the women of the family. Maria Mies in Patriarchy and Accumulation on world scale extends the definition of patriarchy by saying that today male dominance goes beyond this rule of the father to include husbands, male bosses, and ruling men in most societal institutions and in politics and economics. She contends that historically patriarchal systems were developed at a particular time, by particular people in particular geographical regions. Their main mechanisms of expansion were robbery, warfare and conquest.

There are two interpretations regarding the emergence of patriarchy: the Marxist and the Feminist. Friedrich Engels points out that the emergence of surplus and development of the idea of male inheritance transformed the relationship between men and women. The system of private property transformed women's role 'from an equal partner to a subordinate wife'. Class exploitation and sexual repression emerged together to serve the interests of propertied class. Strongly influenced by evolutionist thinking, Engels separates earlier stages as pre-history from actual human history, which, according to him, begins only with civilisation. This means that it begins with full-fledged class and patriarchal relations.

On the other hand, the feminist interpretation is that patriarchy is the outcome of a historical phenomenon. It contests the Marxist view by saying that the social relations of patriarchy emerged when the mother gave birth to a child and fed him/her which was a truly human, i.e. conscious, social activity.

Patriarchal relations developed with men and women's relation to nature. Women's relationship with nature was productive while that of men was destructive. Tools such as spear, bow and arrow, axe and hammer, used by men were purely for killing purposes, whereas women used tools such as a hoe or a digging stick to cultivate land and to gather plants.

Historically, with the emergence of patriarchy the social status of women became subordinate to men. Historical evidence suggests that men dominated women with their coercive weapons. The introduction of private property completely enslaved women; they became responsible for producing heirs to the property and keeping the family line in continuity. Their job was to procreate, nourish and train the male issues for the sake of the family; they were regarded as cattle, as breeders. It is plausible that the establishment of harems, the kidnapping and raping of women, the patriarchal lines of descent and inheritance were part of the new mode of production. The agriculturists used female slaves as they were productive in two ways: as agricultural workers and as producers of more slaves. The feudal and capitalist systems modified the means of violence and replaced them with institutions like the patriarchal family and the state, the manager, and also powerful ideological systems. Above all patriarchal religion, law and medicine have defined women as part of nature to be controlled by men. As the lands that were properties of feudal lords so did the bodies of women not belong to themselves but to their lords. Women were the inexhaustible reservoir of human energy. Under patriarchy the socio-cultural and religious customs were developed to further family interests, to exploit women and to use them politically.

Therefore, practices of hetaerism, prostitution and adultery coexisted within monogamous marriage. Women were accused, despised and regarded as outcasts. At the

same time adultery became an unavoidable social institution that was denounced, severely penalised, but was impossible to suppress.

The institution of marriage was fully utilised for the sake of the preservation of the family where girls were forced into undesirable marriages to maintain amiable relations with an enemy's family. This was possible because of the various sacrifices made by women. However, these sacrifices failed to raise the status of women; they remained subordinated. History is replete with examples of royal princesses being married to the conquerors after defeat in order to maintain diplomatic relations. For example, Babur's sister, Khanzadah, was married to the Uzbek ruler Shaibani Khan in a deal to allow the besieged Babur to escape from Samarqand. Also, Mary Louis, the Austrian princess married Napoleon against her wish to save the kingdom from his hands. Women were also given away as gifts; conquered tribes often presented their girls to the victors. In the Eskimo tribes there was a custom to allow the guests to sleep with the host's wife.

Patriarchy moulds itself according to respective cultures and communities. Patriarchy also creates a division between the public and the private, between 'world' and 'home'. It is actually a gender division, the public world being male and the private world being female and it is one which affects women most profoundly. Patriarchy underestimates the capabilities of women. It pays them less for doing the same work. It tells them that girls are different from boys in every way, not only biologically but also temperamentally. It also places a high value on virginity and purity, and imposes chastity in women as the highest virtue. And yet it is patriarchy that tells men that they can beat, abuse and rape women. In fact, it tells women that it is their own fault if they are raped, beaten or abused.

Patriarchy has established a system of control over the world that places more men than women in positions of

power and authority. Patriarchy is visible in the structures of the institutions that guide and govern our lives —within the family, at school and universities, in the church, temple and mosque: in marriage and the work place, in the factories and in the fields, in the state and in the institutions of local government; in the armed forces and in the civilian defence squads; in the mass media, in the courts of law (Ibid).

Patriarchy socialises women so that they accept hierarchies and other structures of power and control without ever daring to question them. Patriarchy uses violence and the threat of violence in many overt and covert ways in order to maintain its hold on power (Ibid).

However, it would be encouraging to have an optimistic approach towards the struggle against patriarchy. "Patriarchy enables us to link our present struggles to a past and thus can also give us hope that there will be a future. If patriarchy had a specific beginning in history it also has an end," writes Maria Mies.

Are Traditions secret?

Whenever a girl is murdered in the name of karo kari or honour killing, it is justified as being part of tribal and feudal traditions and those who commit the crime are eulogised as heroes. This raises the question that why people regard their obsolete traditions as sacred and unchangeable? In Pakistan, we still have a strong tribal and feudal culture. The continuity of it assures the people that the traditions which are a product of this culture are permanent and one should not only observe them but take pride in them.

During the early period of history when the institution of the state was either non-existent or was weak, socio-cultural traditions evolved within the community to maintain unity and cohesiveness among the members. They were based on social ties, economic relations, and environment, climate and gender differences. Shared social customs were transmitted from generation to generation, which provided an unbroken channel of continuity with the past. Customs and traditions gave the impression of a community being organised.

History tells us that social practices are mundane and basically pragmatic. A society, by keeping its customs and traditions alive, produces and sustains primary values, benefits, attitudes and motivation. However, some of the customs and traditions subjugate lower classes and castes; like in most cultures men dominate at the expense of women.

Socio-cultural practices have more appeal for the people than religious customs or laws. For example, Ibbetson writes in Glossary of tribes and castes of the

Punjab that "The Musalman Rajput, Gujjar, or Jat, is for all social, tribal, political and administrative purposes exactly as much a Rajput, Gujjar or Jat as his Hindu brother. His social customs are unaltered, his tribal restrictions are unrelated, and his values of marriage and inheritance are unchanged... The fact is that the people are bound by social and tribal customs far more than any rules of religion". Sometimes a compromise is made to amalgamate religious ceremonies and symbols in socio-cultural customs. In other words, customs and religions interact and reproduce each other.

It should remain clear that there is a difference between customs and laws. Customs and traditions originate within a community and the whole community participates in their formation. They evolve within a society through social activity of the people.

Laws, whether divine or secular, need an authority to implement them, and the implementation often relies on coercive methods. Laws also vary from government to government, whereas customs and traditions are formed over a period of centuries and are thus enduring. Hence, customs and traditions have more power, influence and respect among the people than laws. If anybody raises a voice against them, he/she is boycotted, expelled and excommunicated.

In the Medieval period it was a serious crime to question a custom, and rendered the member defenceless against all odds. Survival of the individual without the help of the community would be difficult.

History shows that laws had little effect on social practices. For example, when Akbar passed the law against the custom of sati, it remained ineffective. However, the Brahmo Samaj movement against sati in Bengal, led by Raj Ram Mohanroy, succeeded in abolishing the custom and hence made the law passed by the British government against sati effective.

As a result of the evolution of customs and traditions a system takes shape and is solidified, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, and habits. It becomes obligatory for every member to follow this system. They are part of the identity process. Shahida Latif in her book Muslim women in India observes that "most religious and cultural systems in the world endeavour to control men and women's lives and activities in order to ensure the continuity of a society."

However, history tells us that traditions are created in a certain situation and circumstance to suit the need of the time. With changing time, there is always a need to develop new traditions and values to respond to the challenges of the period.

The problem is that those who believe in the sacredness of traditions argue that they were put together by the past generations and have survived all vicissitude of time; therefore, they have wisdom and experience of the past and are in a position to sustain the modern challenges. Those who are interested in keeping the old customs and traditions alive are those whose status and privileges are attached to them; they believe in status quo and are not in favour of any change.

We find this attitude in our tribal leaders, especially where women are concerned, to continue the old custom of honour killing on the basis of the past. They try to legitimise it on the plea that they want to conserve these customs and traditions in the name of tribal or family honour, not realising that the world is changing and to continue the old system is no longer possible. However, when there is any violation of these traditions, they resort to violence in order to preserve them and terrorise those who attempt to deviate from them. It is the verdict of history that the societies which stick to the obsolete customs and traditions become stagnant and remain backward. Those who are ready to accept change and

develop new values and traditions to suit the need of time progress and contribute to world civilisation.

Will European occupiers apologize?

History is a dynamic subject. From time to time, it brings to light some controversial topics to look at with a fresh perspective. It also initiates debate on those past events that either were neglected or ignored by historians. With change in time, emerging theories and tools of knowledge are proving enough space to understand them fro different angles. For example, take the question of occupation and genocide. Recently, the former prime minister of Spain, Jose, Maria Aznar, defending Pope Benedict XVI's reference to Islam said: " Why do we always have to say sorry and they never do?" He further explained a Muslim say sorry for having conquered Spain and occupied it for eight centuries." He is right. The Muslims should apologise for occupying and ruling Spain. But first of all we have to understand the term 'occupation'. And know what it means and what role it played in the history of humankind. Throughout history, powerful and imperial nations conquered and occupied countries which were weak and failed to defend themselves against the military might of the invaders. Sometimes, the occupation was temporary, just to loot and plunder resources and sometimes it was permanent. In case of permanent occupation, there were two options: either to eliminate the local population completely or partially and reduce them to a position so that they could nor challenge the occupation, or in some cases, the conquerors opted to assimilate with them and adopt their culture an own the land as their own.

Keeping in view this definition, of those countries that occupied others' land and settled permanently, including the local population to share with them, Spain is

on the top of the list. In 1492, the same year when the Moors and the Jews were expelled from Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella sponsored Columbus to find a new sea routs to the East. Mistakenly, he found the New World. What happened to the newly discovered land is a tale of massacre, bloodshed of the local inhabitants and destruction of three South American civilization: Inca, Aztec, and Maya. Patrick Sale in his book *The Conquest of Paradise* documented details of the conquerors and occupiers who mercilessly massacred not only the local people but also destroyed the environment of the continent.

History is full of the cruelties, barbarities and greed of the Spanish conquistadors.

Cortes (1485-1547), who destroyed the Aztec capital and killed to acquire gold, is a well known figure in the history of Latin America. Greed for gold and land followed the other conquistadors who did not spare any opportunity to seize land and evict the local inhabitants. The result was that the whole of South America was permanently occupied by the Spaniards (except Brazil which was occupied by the Portuguese). The local population was systematically forced to vacate land and work for them in silver mines. They were converted to Christianity and pushed back to the mountains or forests to live a miserable life.

The story of North America is no different. The European not only seized their land but also massacred them by adopting different methods. Now they are kept in isolated places in poverty. History repeated the same acts in Australia and New Zealand. In South Africa, the occupiers adopted the policy of apartheid, permanently humiliating the local population and exploiting them as a labour force. Resistance was brutally crushed.

Another example is that of Israel, which was created with the help of the US and Europe to occupy Palestinian land permanently. The local population was

evicted, terrorized and slaughtered. The temporary occupation of the Golan heights and the West bank is continuing to the press. The recent occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan by the US is a stark example of violation of all human rights.

The other question is of genocide. Recently, French President Jacques Chirac asked the Turkish government to apologies for the genocide of the Armenians which took place in 1915017 by the Ottomans. The French parliament has passed a law to make denial of the Armenian genocide a crime.

Again, it is a right approach to condemn all acts of genocide. But France must study its own history and remember the massacre of the Algerians. It is also important to remind other colonial powers of their acts of genocide. We remember the massacre of *Jallianwala Bagh* by the British. Libyans did not forget the killing of their people by the Italians. How can the Japanese forget the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Vietnamese the massacre of My Lai, Palestinians the massacre of Dier Yasin and Sabra and Shatila?

Colonial history is full of such massacres. From the killings of the so-called   the Great to the Romans, the Arabs, the Europeans and the Americans, all powers are involved in such heinous crimes.

Interestingly, all those individuals, who were responsible for these acts are glorified in their national histories. All nations that committed such crimes in the past and those that are committing them now must understand the nature of occupation and genocide. If these nations express their sense of guilt and apologise, only then can write a history which could create real consciousness to prevent such incidents in future. But if we, ask others to apologise and ignore or justify our own crimes, then we would continue to commit the same crimes with no hope for peace.

The True face of Jinnah

When history is written, history and personalities are often reinterpreted and adjusted according to prevailing political and social trends. However, those who hold a traditional outlook vehemently oppose any change in what they perceive to be true historical narratives.

Secondly, when academics write something new, or discover new facts and reconstruct the past, it is discussed and Debated within a limited circle of scholars. On the other hand, when a politician exposes something new or different to the existing opinion, the media projects it and turns it into a sensational topic. Such is the case Jaswant Singh's book on Jinnah.

Interestingly, the image of Jinnah is changing in India and Pakistan for different reasons. After partition, in both the countries, the history of the Freedom Movement was written either according to the Congress or the Muslim League's points of view. Therefore, in India, the image of Jinnah was that of a communalist leader who was responsible for carving up the Indian subcontinent into two parts, a crime which could not be forgiven. He was labeled a non-compromising and stubborn leader who, on all occasions, refused to readjust his demands and insisted on his terms.

On the contrary, Gandhi and Nehru emerged as leaders, who negotiated and made many attempts to compromise with him. This image of Jinnah persisted in the traditional Indian historiography till the 80s. However, some historians raised their voice against this image and presented Jinnah differently. The most important study is of Ajeet jawed whose book *Jinnah: Secular an Nationalist*

made an attempt to change image and rehabilitate him as a staunch Indian nationalist who throughout his career struggled fro Indian's freedom against the British rule.

An Australian historian, Jan Nyrant Wells, in his book *Ambassador of Hindu Unity: Jinnah's Early Politics*, argues that throughtout his political career Jinnah remained a nationalist, anti-imperialist and there is no difference between the early or later period periods of his political life. However, these academic voices did not create any sensation in the media.

In Pakistan, the image of Jinnah is changing with political change in the country. In the traditional point of view, his secular and nationalist image is not highlighted: he was reduced to a Muslin leader who struggled for the rights of Indian Muslims and created a new country for them to follow their religious teachings freely.

As the character of the country became Islamic, it needed not a secular Founding Father but a staunch religious man. Therefore stories of his religious devotion are fabricated and circulated among the public. Religious references are taken out from his speeches to prove that he wanted a welfare state based on Islamic principles of justice. His official portrait is in Sherwani and Jinnah cap not in western dress, smoking dress, smoking a cigar. This image is widely projected in the text books and by official media.

However, his image of Jinanh is challenged by some scholars and politicians who argue that he was against theocracy and in favour of a modern secular state. There are some circles who rejected Jinnah as a competent leader and accuse mistakes which led the country into chaos and anarchy, such as his decision in his role as Governor General to dissolve the NWFP provincial assembly, presiding over cabinet meetings and delegating the prime minister to a side role and his dismissal of the chief minister of Sindh.

As the political situation of the country deteriorates the image of Jinnah is also becoming distorted. He is blamed for leaving for leaving the country in the hands of incompetent leaders who have led it to the brink of breakdown. Consequently, this raises the question whether Partition solved the problems of the Indian Muslims or put them in more trouble?

The result is that in Pakistan, there are two images of Jinnah: one is that projected by the establishment which is based on the two-nation theory and anti-Indian policy. The other is of a secular Jinnah which is not generally welcomed expect in a small circle of liberal and progressive people.

Jaswant Singh's book important in this context. In India, with this change of image, Jinnah remains no longer a communalist but a nationalist and secular who had no hostility against the Hindus and who was reluctant about Partition. He is no longer to be blamed for it. Nehru and Patel are equally responsible for the division of India. Moreover, Jinnah was not anti-Hindu as most of this close friends were either Hindu or Parsi.

On the other hand, in Pakistan, it will help the secular circle which so far bases its arguments on his August 11 speech. A secular Jinnah suits not only India but also Pakistan which is under the grip of religious extremism and can only get out of it with a new system based on pluralism and tolerance.

Akbar- a great Mughal?

Historiography is an ideological state becomes a tool to justify it by distorting events and misinterpreting facts. Pakistan came into being on the basis of 'two nation' theory and so the historians tried to legitimize it on the basis of history. To begin with, the task of tracing the roots of Hindu-Muslim separation was undertaken by I.H. Qureshi, who in hi writings, provides a historical basis for the theory. He was followed by Moinul Haq and S.M. Ikram. These historians redefined the history of the sub Indian sub continent worth the perspective of the two nation theory and therefore criticized and condemned all those historical personalities who deviated from it and contributed to a composite culture. One of their victims is Akbar who, in their opinion. Weakened the Muslim power in India by making alliances with the Hindus and inducting them in his service.

I.H. Qureshi in *The Muslim Community of Indian subcontinent* argues that: "The most obvious reason was that Akbar changed the nature of polity profoundly. The Muslims were still a dominant group in the state, but it had ceased to be a Muslim state. Now Muslims were only one of the communities in empire which controlled th Council and the armed might of the state. Akbar had weakened Islam through his policies."

S.M. Ikram in his book *Hostory of Muslim Civilization in Indian and Pakistan* writes that: "His efforts at religious syncretism were doomed to failure. Of course, roots of this failure went even deeper – to the fundamental differences between Islam and Hinduism and the basis reluctance of the two communities to merge."

Shaikh A. Rashid. Writing on the Mughals in *A Short History of Pakistan* repeats. I.H.Qureshi's view that: "In the beginning they saw with satisfaction and even pride that the Hindus has started wielding the sword of Islam, they soon learnt that the sword would not always be wielded in the interest of Islam."

One historian who challenges this analysis provides a fresh perspectives about Akbar ad his policies in Ahmed Basher, former professor of history,. University of Sindh, whose book *Akbar the Great Mughal: His New Policy, His New Religion* was published in 1967 when the views of I.H.Qureshi and S.M. Ikram and other ideological historians dominated Pakistani historiography; consequently it could not be disturbed and remained unknown to scholars. Recently, it was published by an Indian publisher and provides a different point of view of Akbar than that of most Pakistani historians.

According to Basher's point of view Akbar's Rajput was not the product of his religious policy. He adopted it when he was quite young and a deeply religious man. However, he realized that good relations were important for the state. His first marriage with the Rajput princess was not the result of coercion or force; it was by mutual consent of both the parties. After marrying Rajut women. He inducted their families the Mughal administration. They became part of the royal family. He not only respected them but treated them on equal basis: visited their palaces on different occasions, awarded them on their services, and trusted them beyond any doubt. They were assigned the task to guard the royal harem. Raja Bhagwan Das was appouinted his deputy in his absence from the caital. He was also appointed governor of Afghanistan. Man Singh became the *mansabdar* of 7,000 soldiers – a post which was reserved for princes. The Rajputs paid back and fought for the expansion of the Mughal Empire.

Akbar's policy towards other Hindu rajas was not to make them tributary but ask them to become a part of his empire and serve him as his nobles. He appointed Todar Mal as his *Diwan* or finance minister who was next to the king in hierarchy. He opened all posts on merit which made the state equal for both Hindus and Muslims. "Hindus were serving under Muslim nobles, Muslims were fighting under Hindu generals." They were all serving the Emperor." Akbar created such mutual understanding that Hindus and Muslims "lived together, worked together, were put in charge together, were with their Emperor together, even in privacy.

Akbar's major contribution towards a composite culture was to adopt the Indian cultural traditions. He was deeply interested in Hindu epics such as *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* which he ordered to be translated into Persian. He enjoyed the company of Hindu saints and *rishis*. He kept Hindu physician at the court. He loved Indian music. He patronized Hindu painters and provided them all facilities.

His court adopted Hindu festivals such as *diwali, holi* and *desehra* and they were celebrated with grandeur. He also adopted the Indian tradition f *Tuldan:* i.e. the weighing ceremony of the emperor in different kinds of goods which were then distributed among the poor.

Akbar's entire concept was that he was the king of all his subjects irrespective of their religion caste and creed. By Indianising the court he converted the Mughals into Indians. His policy was not opportunistic but genuine to create a composite culture. He kept religion aside in the construction of his state structure. The results of his policy were not negative as some Pakistani historians derive in their analysis. It made the Mughal state strong enough to withstand all challenges and it retained its authority till 1707 in spite of the changes which were made by Aurangzeb.

During Akbar's entire regin both Hindus and Muslims felt secure and the emperor was loved by his Hindu subjects who called him *Mahabali* or the mighty one.

Ahmed Bashir stands for in history – toleration of all religions and citizenship for all subjects, recognition of merit, eligibility for one and all for every post, even the highest in the state service, and appreciation of everything appreciable, Muslim or Hindu – was not due to any deviation from Islam on his part. It was the work of a keen-sighted statesman"

Akbar on Trial

In the middle of the 19th century, with the emergence of separate Muslim consequences, the medieval history of India was also reconstructed by some Muslim scholars.

While analyzing the downfall of the Mughals, first of all, it was portrayed as Muslin rule over the Hindus, then the reason for its degeneration was interpreted as the synthesis of the Hindu-Muslim culture. Akbar was especially accused of being ruler, who, by marrying Rajput princesses, polluted the blood of the Mughals. When he inducted Hindus in the administrative set up and appointed them at high posts, its isolated the Muslim community, which weakened the Mughal roots of power and ultimately brought about its downfall.

Interestingly, by the end of the 19th century, there was a debate at the M.A.O. College, Aligarh regarding who was responsible for the downfall of the Mughals: Akbar or Aurangzeb?

Then some articles were published in the Urdu newspaper blaming Akbar for his Rajput policy damaging the Muslim identity. The debate divided Muslim historians into two groups. After the partition of India in 1947. it continued in Pakistan where Akbar became unfavourable because his political and religious views did not suite the two nation ideology of Pakistan.

In fact, Akbar was the real founder of the Moughal Empire. When he became the king he inherited small kingdoms which were politically and financially not stable. He following the policy of imperialism, expanded his empire. As an empire builder, he fully realized that his

subjects belonged to different religions, castes and creeds; this view demanded that all of them should be treated on the basis of equality and full opportunity be given to all to serve the empire. This led to a policy of cultural pluralism.

He also believed that an empire could not be ruled by a single religious or ethnic group. That's why he opened the doors of administration to every capable and intelligent man. And he was successful in his efforts to get the most efficient and professional officers to make the empire stable and strong. He followed the policy of *sulh-i-kul* or 'peace with all' in matters of religion. By abolishing *jizya* or poll tax and the religious tax on the Hindu pilgrims, he tried to eliminate religious discriminations between Hindus and Mulsims and brought them together on the basis of equality. When the ulema at the court created some obstacles in his way, he got rid of them and separated the state and religion from each other.

Akbar' greatest contribution was to structure the 'state institutions and introduce a large number of departments to look after the affairs of the government. He had an innovative mind and so experimented with different ideas to make his rule popular. His *mansabdari* system was a mixture of civil and military services which made his nobles both bureaucrats as well as generals. His revenue policy extracted the surplus from the peasants but left enough for their survival, while his organization of the army helped him to conquer more kingdoms and crush rebellions. He set up a number of departments to fulfill the demands of an empire. Abul Fazal, his close friend and court historian gives full details in *A' in-e-Akbari* about these departments such as the mint, calligraphy, painting, arsenals, buildings, library, treasury, and the rules of encampment. Akbar systematically organized the royal household which included fresh *lhana* (carpets), perfumery, kitchen, dresses and *adbar, khana* (drinks). He especially

took care and mules and regularly checked that they should get proper food.

At the court he introduced etiquette and protocols in order to create a sober and respectful atmosphere. He started a system to award his nobles with *jagirs* and titles on their performance. In each department he appointed competent officers and observed a very strict daily routine to check everything personally.

In matters of religion he was interested to learn the truth and he enjoyed discussing religious matters with the scholars of different religions but he aid not let it interfere in the politics of the state. Ahmad Basher in *Akbar the Great Mughal* rightly observes that: "He searched for the truth, tried to know the secret of the miraculous powers attributed to prophets and saints and sought to have direct communion with God. But in vain, from religion to religion , to see if anywhere there existed what he desired. There was no flash of light to guide him in the darkness. Disappointed, he formulated his own order his own Order. How far it helped him on his path is not known...but he was honest throughout his long journey". His new religious order which Abul Fazal calls A' in *Rahnumai* it rules and regulations for guidance and later came to be known as *Din-i-illahi* ended after his death but his political ideas and philosophy survive even today. He symbolizes the foremost secular and nationals ruler of India.

How could such a versatile individual cause the down fall of the Mughal rule?

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